



DC SUPERMAN

ACTION COMICS

48
pages
ONLY
25¢



NO. 407
DEC.
30410

48 PAGES 25¢ BIGGER AND BETTER DC ACTION COMICS 48 PAGES 25¢ BIGGER AND BETTER



THIS WILL
COST ME MY
**SECRET
IDENTITY**
AS **CLARK
KENT...**

BUT I
CAN'T LET HIM
KILL THAT MAN
AND HIS SON!



SUPERMAN'S BEST-KEPT SECRET,
EVEN HIS VERY LIFE ARE THREATENED BY..
**"The FIEND IN THE
FORTRESS of SOLITUDE"**
PLUS "The **PLANET of PREY**"

ELECTRONICS INTERNATIONAL

1972
MODEL

5 BAND PORTABLE RADIO

Plays on Battery or Current
23 SOLID STATE DEVICES

AM • FM • POLICE • AIRCRAFT • SHORTWAVE



ONLY
\$29⁹⁵

LISTEN
TO THE
WHOLE
WORLD!

THE FEATURES YOU WANT IN A RADIO



4 C cell batteries, AC cord, Built in AC adaptor, Ear phone plus automatic frequency control (no extras to buy).

LIKE HAVING 5 RADIOS IN 1

Tune in as police speed to disasters, or close in on wanted criminals. Listen as huge airliners speak to airport towers. Hear direct broadcasts from strange and distant countries. You'll get all standard AM local stations, disc jockeys, ball games, news, etc. Enjoy the finest in FM music.

Designed with Solid State circuitry for stabilized performance on each frequency. Thermistor assures outstanding performance under all climate conditions. Superhetrodyne receiver eliminates station "crossover."

MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE

ELECTRONICS INTERNATIONAL, Dept. RF-84
210 South Des Plaines Street • Chicago, Illinois 60606
Gentlemen: Please rush on money-back guarantee 5 Band Radio at \$29.95 plus \$1.00 Postage and Handling.

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Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

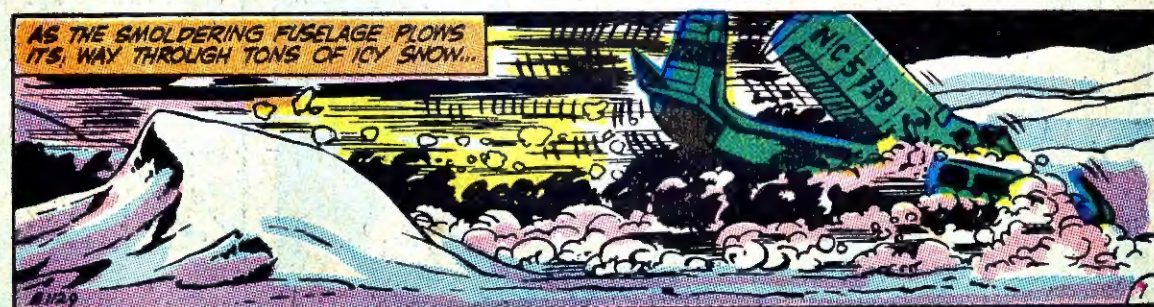
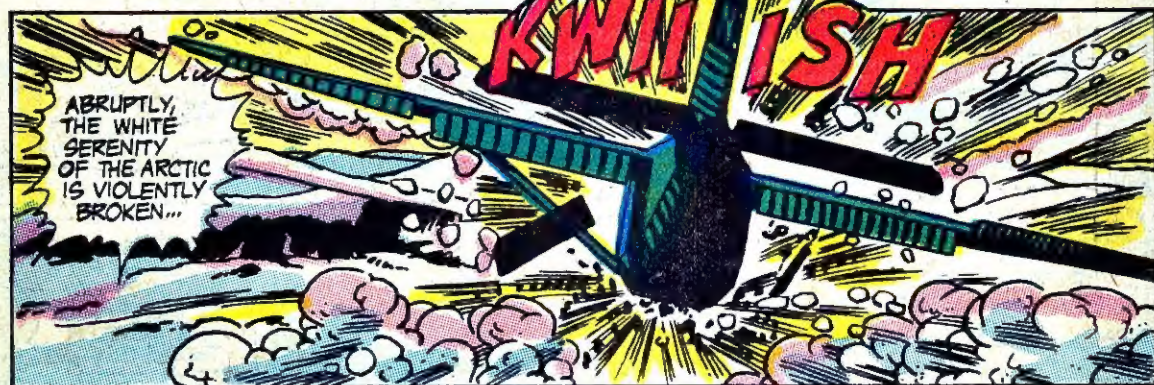
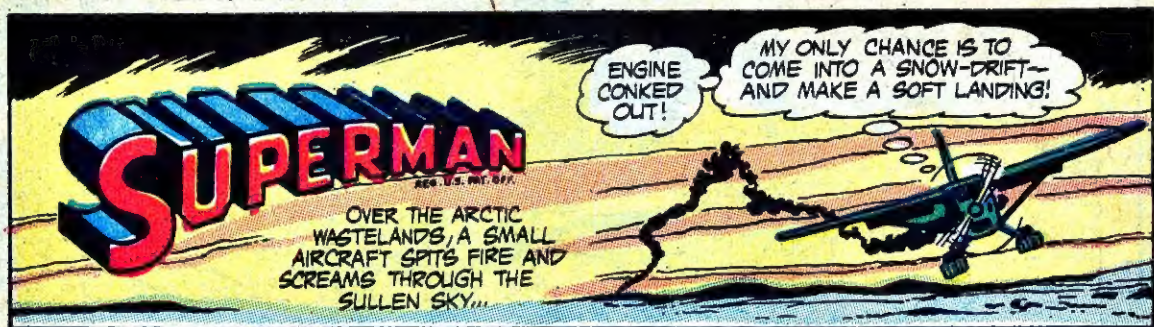
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☐ Send me Deluxe 7 Band Radio at \$34.95 plus \$1.00 Postage and Handling.
☐ Ship C.O.D. I enclose \$1.00 deposit.
Ill. residents pay 5% sales tax

Guarantee

You must be 100% satisfied with your Deluxe 1971 Model 5 Band Radio or your money will be refunded in full.

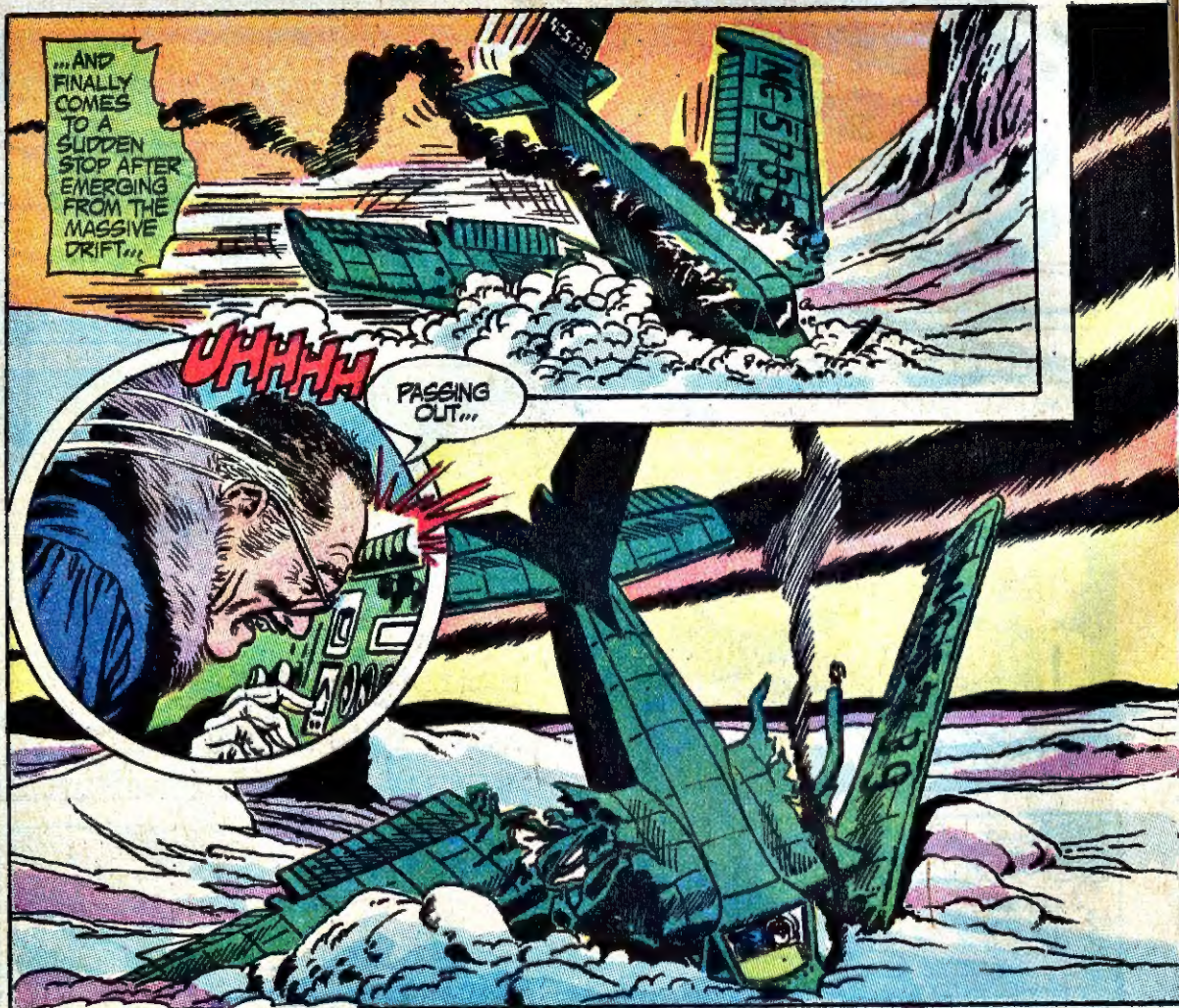
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...AND FINALLY COMES TO A SUDDEN STOP AFTER EMERGING FROM THE MASSIVE DRIFT...

UHHHHH

PASSING OUT...

THE PILOT'S *UNCONSCIOUS!* LOOKS LIKE MY SECRET IS *STILL* SAFE!

DON'T THINK HE'S SERIOUSLY INJURED...BUT I'LL FLY HIM TO THE NEAREST HOSPITAL IN ALASKA JUST TO MAKE SURE!

SOON...

A MILD CONCUSSION, *SUPERMAN!* HE SHOULD BE BACK ON HIS FEET IN A FEW DAYS!

I'LL CHECK BACK LATER, THEN! I'D LIKE TO QUESTION HIM!

I'M SURE I SAW HIM SOMEWHERE BEFORE... BUT I CAN'T IDENTIFY HIM YET!

YES, *SUPERMAN!* AN ELUSIVE FACE THAT APPEARS TO SLEEP--TO HIDE SINISTER THOUGHTS...

YOU'VE MADE THE BIGGEST MISTAKE OF YOUR LIFE, *SUPERMAN!* YOU DON'T KNOW I PURPOSELY SLAMMED MY HEAD TO KNOCK MYSELF OUT!

GREAT KRYPTON!
WHAT I ALWAYS
FEARED HAS
FINALLY HAPPENED...

AND SO BEGINS THE
STARTLING SAGA OF
HOW *SUPERMAN'S*
BEST-KEPT SECRETS--
HIS MOST CHERISHED
POSSESSIONS--EVEN
HIS VERY *LIFE*--ARE
THREATENED BY A
RUTHLESS, VENGEFUL
FOE!

The FIEND IN THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE

ART: SWAN & ANDERSON
STORY: CARY BATES

SOMEONE
ACCIDENTALLY
DISCOVERED
THE SECRET
LOCATION OF MY
FORTRESS!

YOU DON'T KNOW I'VE
MADE THE CENTURY'S
GREATEST DISCOVERY--
I *SAW* YOU FLYING OUT
OF YOUR FAMOUS
FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE!

YOU DON'T KNOW I
MADE A NOTE OF ITS
COORDINATES ON MY
NAVIGATION BOARD
JUST BEFORE I
PASSED OUT...

...AND MEMORIZED
THE POSITION!
I KNOW EXACTLY
WHERE YOUR
FORTRESS IS!

TWO DAYS LATER, AT *WISB'S*
IN METROPOLIS, AS REPORTER
CLARK KENT ADMIRES A GIFT
FOR A CLOSE FRIEND...

MY OLD EDITOR,
PERRY WHITE, SHOULD
LIKE THIS BIRTHDAY
PRESENT--A BRONZE
PLAQUE WITH ALL
THE SIGNATURES
OF THE *DAILY*
PLANET STAFF!

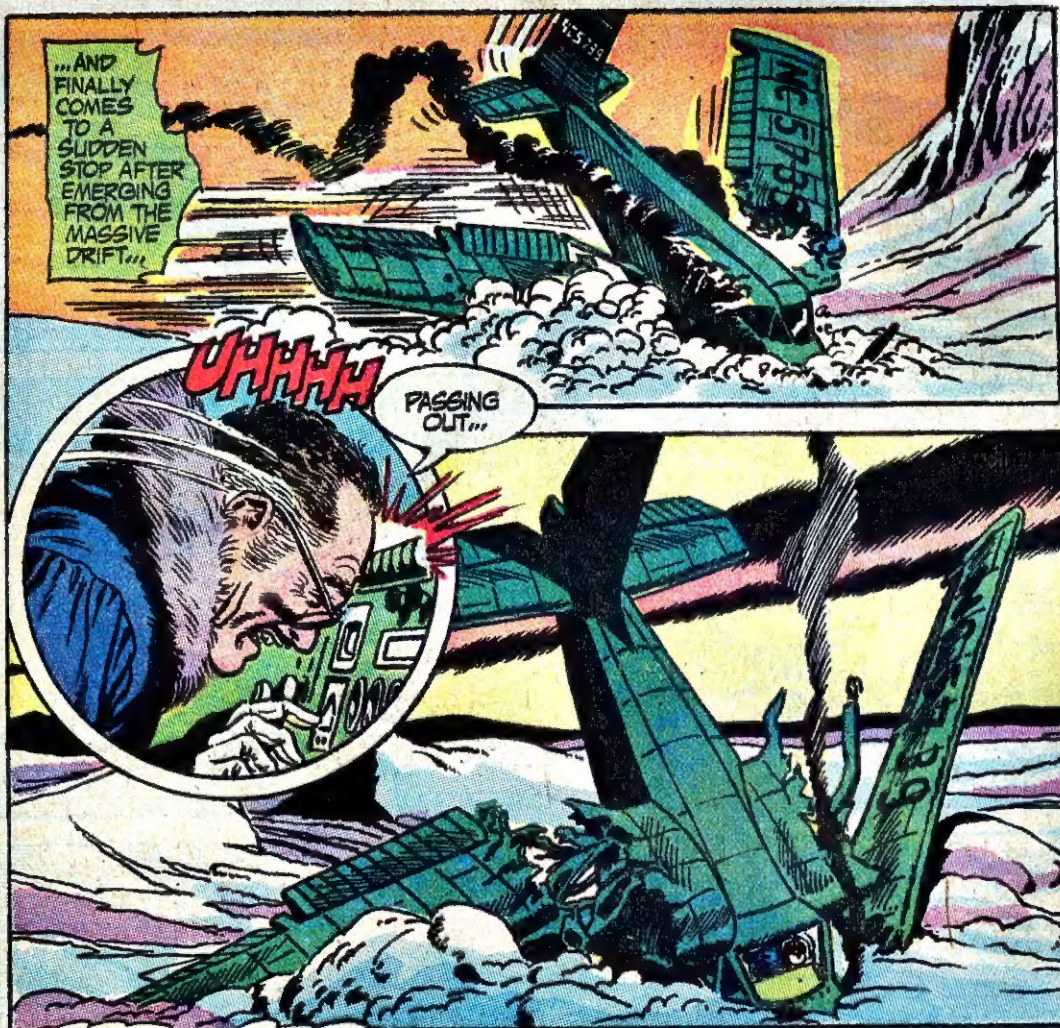
ABRUPTLY...

I REMEMBER *WHERE*
I SAW THAT PILOT'S
FACE BEFORE!

OOOPS!

MOMENTARILY
FORGOT MY
SUPER-
STRENGTH--!

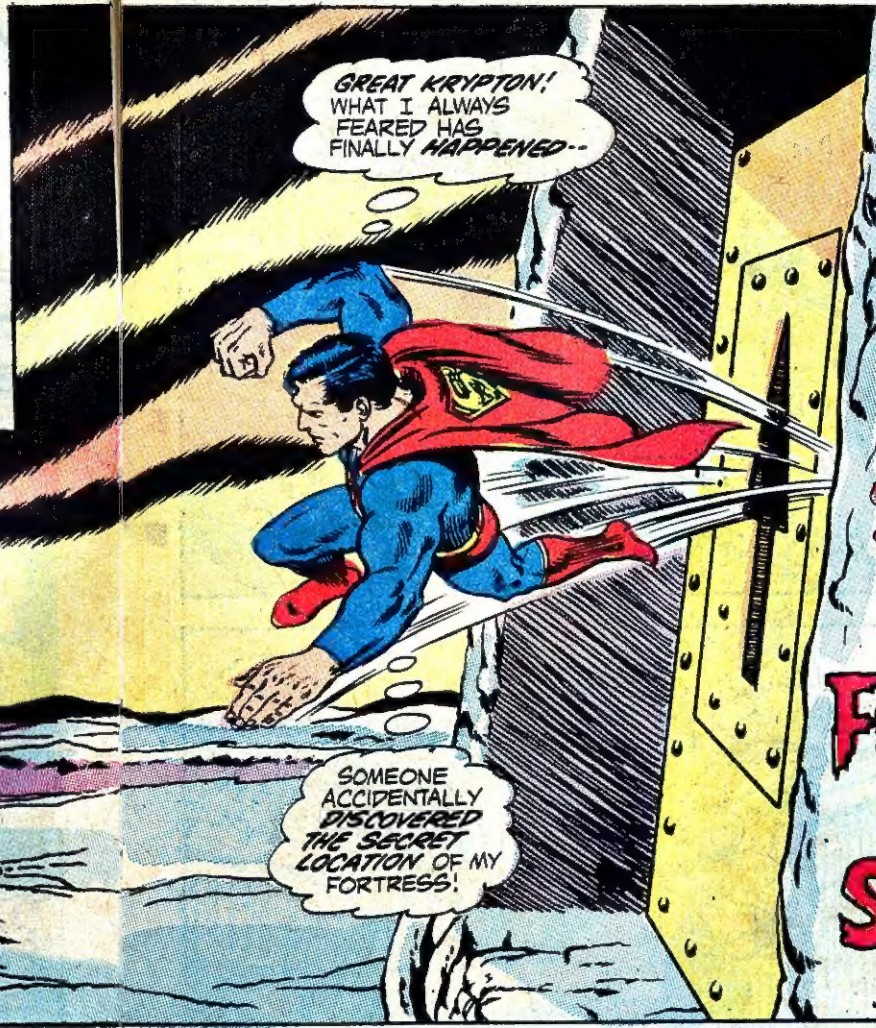
DAILY PLANET
PERRY WHITE



...AND FINALLY COMES TO A SUDDEN STOP AFTER EMERGING FROM THE MASSIVE DRIFT...

UHHHHH

PASSING OUT...



GREAT KRYPTON! WHAT I ALWAYS FEARED HAS FINALLY HAPPENED...

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AND SO BEGINS THE STARTLING SAGA OF HOW SUPERMAN'S BEST-KEPT SECRETS--HIS MOST CHERISHED POSSESSIONS--EVEN HIS VERY LIFE--ARE THREATENED BY A RUTHLESS, VENGEFUL FOE!

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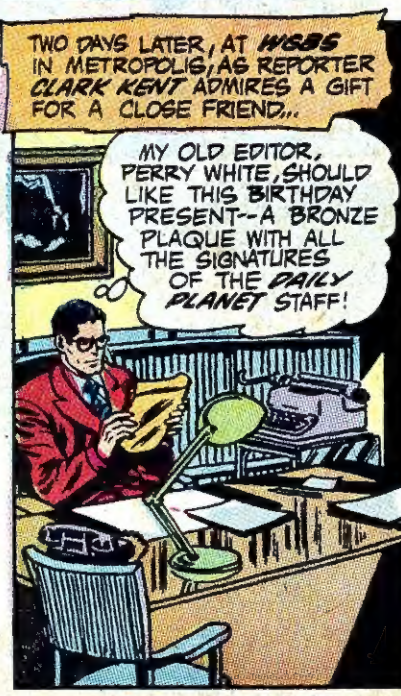
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YOU DON'T KNOW I'VE MADE THE CENTURY'S GREATEST DISCOVERY--I SAW YOU FLYING OUT OF YOUR FAMOUS FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE!

YOU DON'T KNOW I MADE A NOTE OF ITS COORDINATES ON MY NAVIGATION BOARD JUST BEFORE I PASSED OUT...

...AND MEMORIZED THE POSITION! I KNOW EXACTLY WHERE YOUR FORTRESS IS!



TWO DAYS LATER, AT HIS IN METROPOLIS, AS REPORTER CLARK KENT ADMIRES A GIFT FOR A CLOSE FRIEND...

MY OLD EDITOR, PERRY WHITE, SHOULD LIKE THIS BIRTHDAY PRESENT--A BRONZE PLAQUE WITH ALL THE SIGNATURES OF THE DAILY PLANET STAFF!



ABRUPTLY...
I REMEMBER WHERE I SAW THAT PILOT'S FACE BEFORE!

OOOPS!

MOMENTARILY FORGOT MY SUPER-STRENGTH--!

LITILIZING HIS AMAZING **TELESCOPIC VISION**, THE **MAN OF NIGHT** SCANS A POLICE FILE HALF A MILE AWAY...

I APPREHENDED HIM AS **SUPERMAN** YEARS AGO--A CRAFTY, DANGEROUS SCHEMER!

BETTER FLY TO THAT HOSPITAL AND CHECK UP ON ANDREWS RIGHT AWAY!

BUT THE PATIENT HAS ALREADY FLED TO A NEARBY AIRPORT...

STOP THAT GUY! HE'S STEALING A JET!

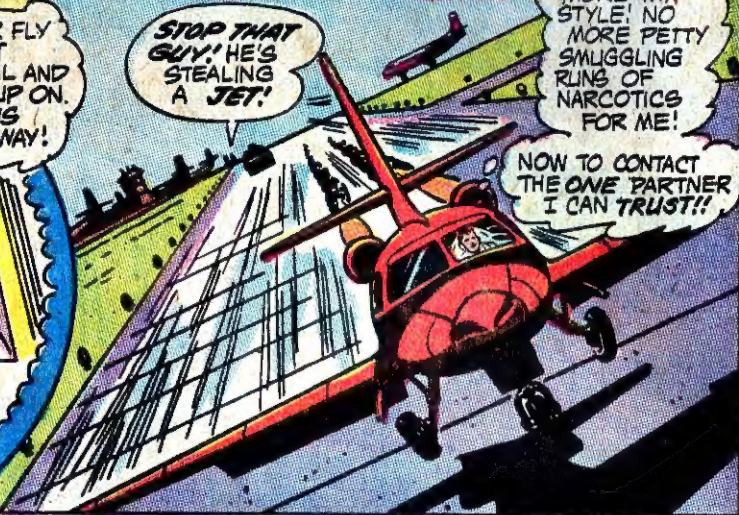
THIS ONE'S MORE MY STYLE! NO MORE PETTY SMUGGLING RINGS OF NARCOTICS FOR ME!

NOW TO CONTACT THE ONE PARTNER I CAN TRUST!!



7065327

MICHAEL "KING" ANDREWS



NOT LONG AFTER, AT A REFORM SCHOOL ON THE EAST COAST...

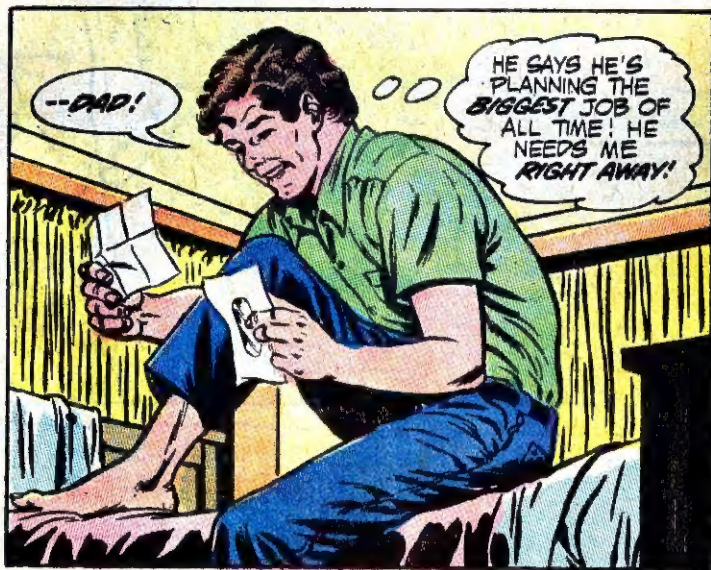
THIS TELEGRAM JUST ARRIVED FOR YOU, MIKE!

HUH? WHO'D BE SENDING ME A TELEGRAM, EXCEPT--

NORFOLK FARM FOR DELINQUENT BOYS

--DAD!

HE SAYS HE'S PLANNING THE BIGGEST JOB OF ALL TIME! HE NEEDS ME RIGHT AWAY!



LATER THAT NIGHT...

NO GUARDS! NO FENCES! THAT'S THE NICE THING ABOUT THIS HONOR FARM-- THEY **TRUST** YOU HERE! I WAS ALMOST GETTING TO LIKE IT--!

BUT HELPING DAD COMES FIRST!



CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.

Never finished high school?

Now you can get a diploma without going back

You already know why it's important to have a high school education. You've probably learned the hard way that it can be pretty difficult to get the kind of job you want without one. No matter how hard you're willing to work.

What can you do about it?

Maybe you've thought of trying again to get a diploma. But you've suffered enough classroom "battle fatigue" to last you a lifetime. So you'd hate to travel that route again even if you could.

But what if we told you that there was now a much better way to get a high school education? An adult way, which gives you regular high school subjects and your choice of practical vocational subjects which help you get started in one of a number of profitable fields.

That's the unique Wayne School way. You do your reading and assignments in your spare time, in the relaxed atmosphere of your own home, and "turn in" your completed assignments by mail. You don't have to give up your present job. You don't have to study or travel to class at inconvenient times.

**Wayne School
wants to help you finish
high school at home**

And you needn't be afraid of dropping out all over again, if you had trouble with school before. Wayne's specially prepared lessons make even difficult subjects much easier to take. And Wayne grades your assignments in private, by mail. You're free from competitive classroom pressures. You stay relaxed, and your progress is much smoother.

If you're 17 or over and not now in school, why not send for more information? Mail coupon for our free booklet, *"How to finish High School at home."* You're in for a pleasant surprise.

Send for free facts

Wayne School
417 S. Dearborn Street, Dept. 72-567
Chicago, Illinois 60605

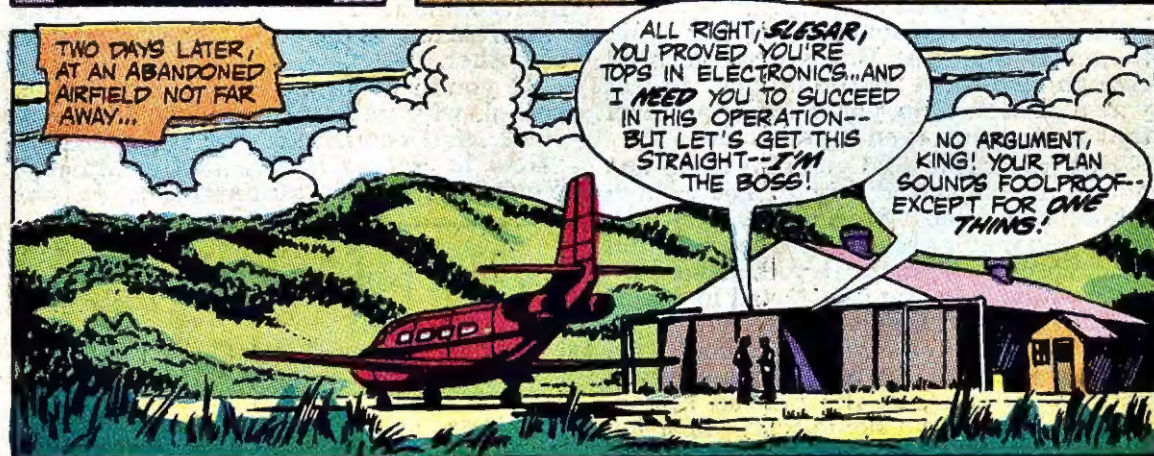
Please send me your free illustrated booklet *"How to finish High School at home"* containing full information about your courses and teaching methods, and about opportunities for high school graduates.

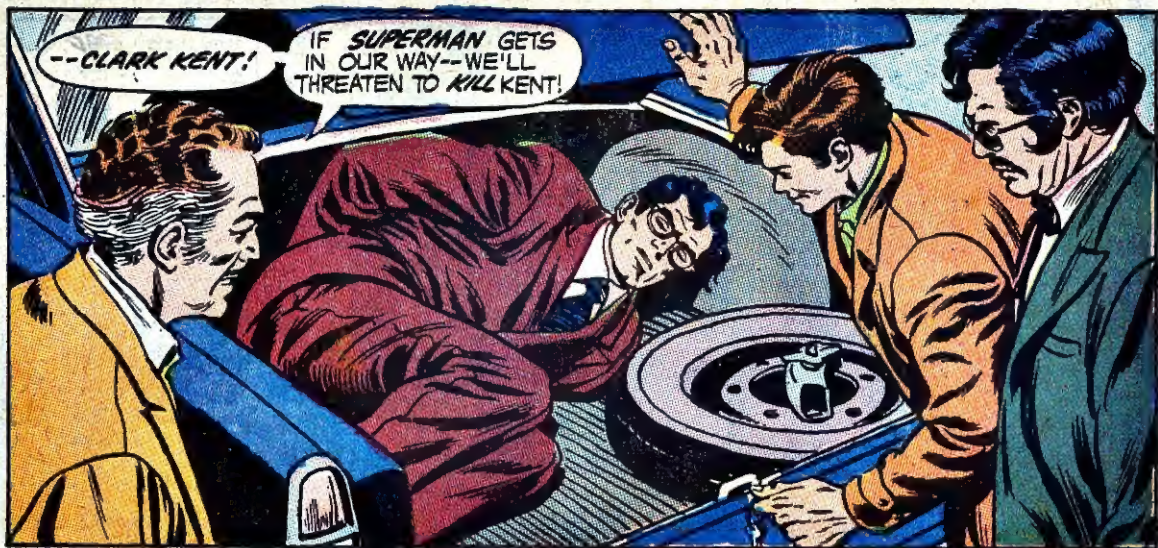
Print Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____





--CLARK KENT!

IF **SUPERMAN** GETS
IN OUR WAY--WE'LL
THREATEN TO **KILL KENT!**



TO PROTECT
MY SECRET
IDENTITY, I
FAKED UNCON-
SCIOUSNESS
WHEN THE KID
SLUGGED ME
IN AN
ELEVATOR!

BUT **THIS** I
DIDN'T EXPECT--
BEING USED AS
A **HOSTAGE**
AGAINST MY-
SELF!



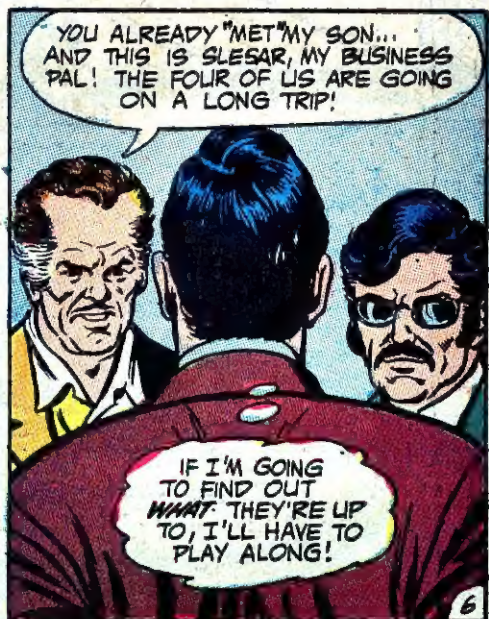
SO YOU'VE COME TO, HUH, KENT?
NOW I WANT YOU TO BE A GOOD
BOY AND DO AS YOU'RE TOLD--
AND YOU MIGHT **NOT** GET HURT!

KING ANDREWS:
I WAS LOOKING
FOR HIM FOR DAYS!
HE'S OBVIOUSLY
GOT SOME PLAN
COOKING... BUT WHY
DID HE SNATCH
ME? WHAT'S
CLARK KENT TO
DO WITH IT?



AND THEN-- **ANOTHER SHOCK...**

MY X-RAY VISION REVEALS
THAT OTHER MAN'S WEARING
A DISGUISE... IF ONLY KING
KNEW THE **BIG TROUBLE**
HE'S IN FOR!



YOU ALREADY "MET" MY SON...
AND THIS IS SLESAK, MY BUSINESS
PAL! THE FOUR OF US ARE GOING
ON A LONG TRIP!

IF I'M GOING
TO FIND OUT
WHAT THEY'RE UP
TO, I'LL HAVE TO
PLAY ALONG!

SOON, ABOARD THE
STOLEN AIRCRAFT...

ONLY I KNOW THE EXACT
LOCATION OF OUR DESTINA-
TION--A SECRET NOBODY
SHARES WITH ME!

SO I'LL
HAVE TO SPRAY
EACH OF YOU
WITH THIS
KNOCKOUT GAS
BEFORE WE
TAKE OFF!

BUT,
DAD--
DON'T
YOU
EVEN
TRUST
YOUR
OWN
SON?

NO ONE,
MIKE!
IT'S THE
ONLY WAY
FOR A
CROOK
LIKE ME
TO
SURVIVE!
YOU GOTTA
LEARN THAT!

SMART,
KING! I'D
DO THE
SAME IF
I KNEW THE
SECRET!

I'LL PRETEND
TO PASS OUT
AGAIN...
BUT I THINK
I KNOW
WHERE
WE'RE
GOING!

MOMENTS LATER,
KING IS PILOTING
THE SLEEK JET
AND ITS SLEEPING
PASSENGERS
NORTHWARD...

WON'T BE LONG
NOW! THE NAME
OF **KING ANDREWS**
WILL BE KNOWN
ALL OVER THE
WORLD... AFTER
I STEAL THE
MOST **FABULOUS**
TROPHIES ON
EARTH!

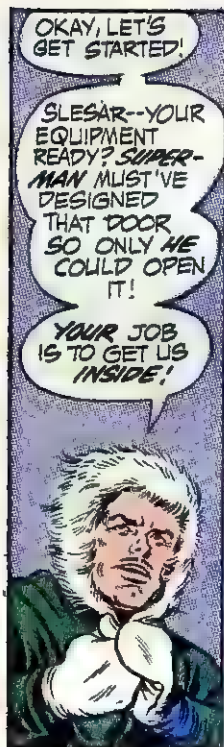


AND AFTER A SUPERSONIC FLIGHT,
FOUR MEN EMERGE TO GAZE IN AWE
UPON A MIGHTY CITADEL AT THE
TOP OF THE GLOBE...

GENTLEMEN--
SUPERMAN'S
FORTRESS
OF SOLITUDE!

YOU DID
IT, DAD!

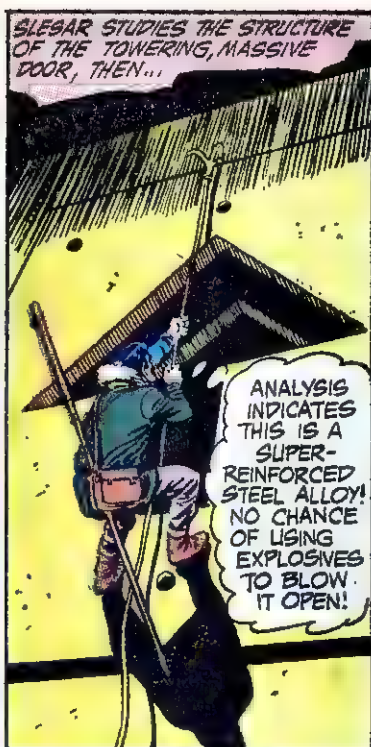
THIS IS BAD NEWS!
KING KNEW THE
LOCATION EVER
SINCE THAT DAY
HE CRASHED!



OKAY, LET'S GET STARTED!

SLESAR--YOUR EQUIPMENT READY? **SUPERMAN** MUST'VE DESIGNED THAT DOOR SO ONLY HE COULD OPEN IT!

YOUR JOB IS TO GET US INSIDE!



SLESAR STUDIES THE STRUCTURE OF THE TOWERING, MASSIVE DOOR, THEN...

ANALYSIS INDICATES THIS IS A SUPER-REINFORCED STEEL ALLOY! NO CHANCE OF USING EXPLOSIVES TO BLOW IT OPEN!



AS I EXPECTED, HE INSTALLED SOME SORT OF VOLATILE ~~FORCE~~-FIELD TO KEEP ANYTHING FROM ENTERING THROUGH HERE!

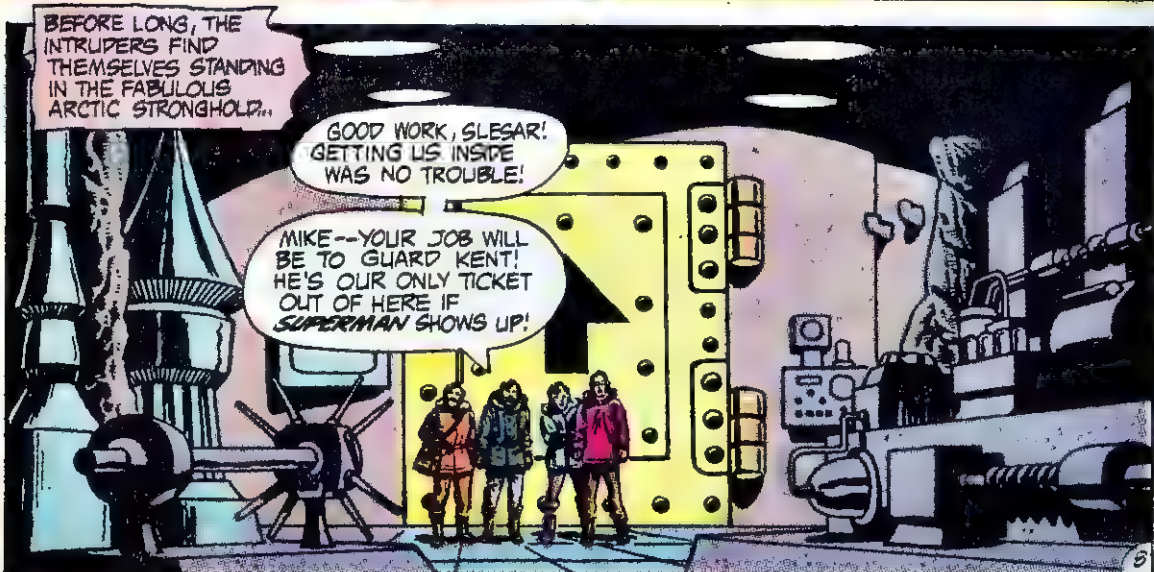
I MUST EXAMINE THE CIRCUITRY AND FIND OUT HOW TO DEACTIVATE IT!



USING EVERY FACET OF HIS CUNNING GENIUS, HE DISSOLVES THE FIELD, THEN...

SUPERMAN TAKES NO CHANCES! THIS IS A **BURGLAR ALARM**--DESIGNED TO SEND OUT AN **ULTRASONIC SIREN** ONLY HE COULD HEAR, WHEREVER HE IS!

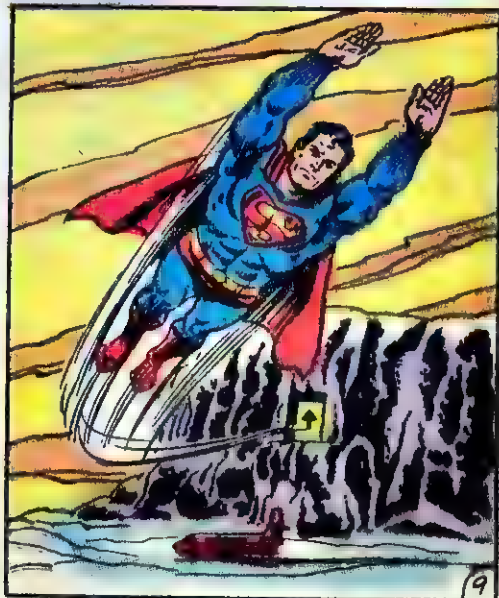
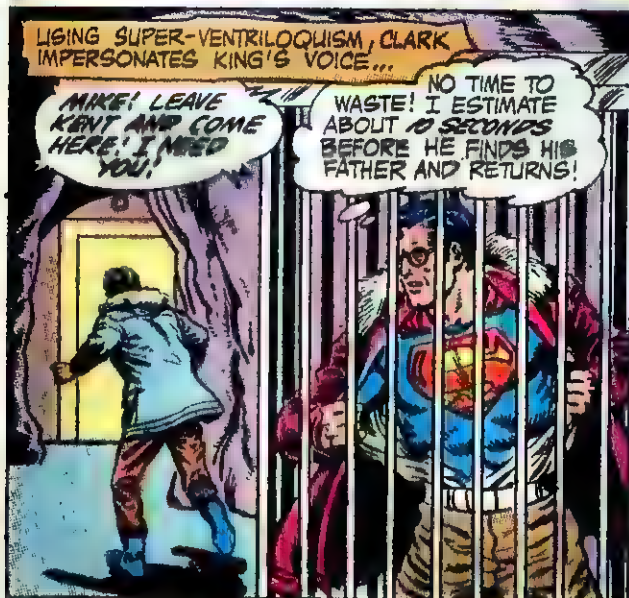
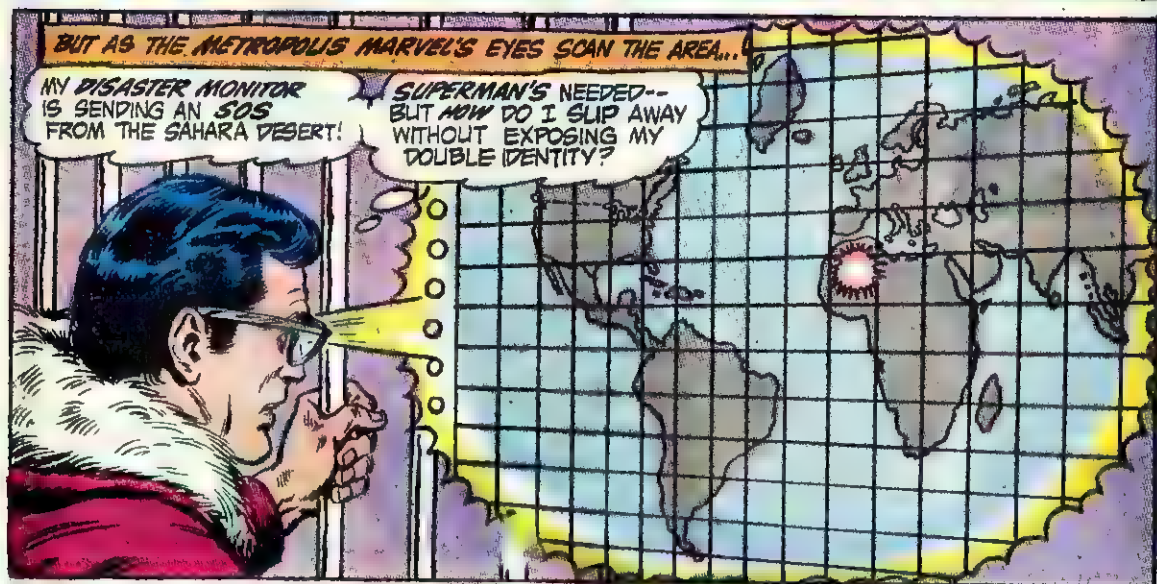
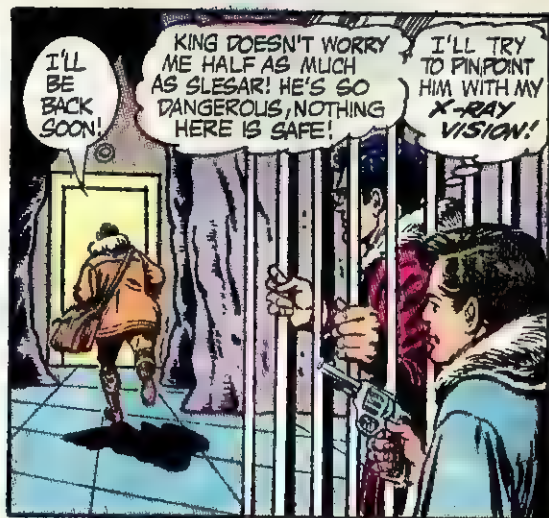
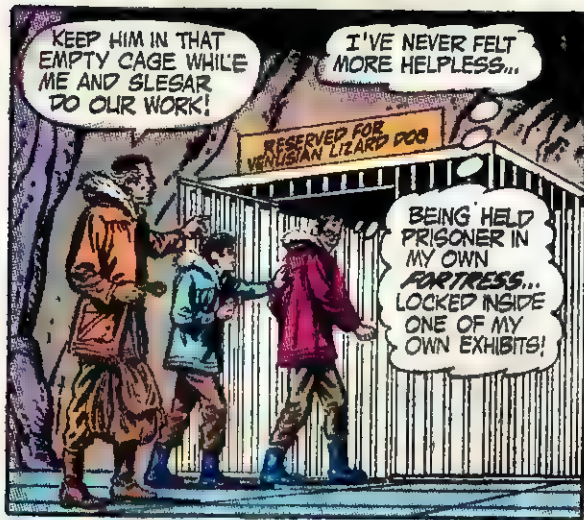
CHILD'S PLAY FOR MY TALENTS! I'LL SIMPLY REWIRE THE ALARM TO **BYPASS** ME... AND THE OTHERS CAN FOLLOW!

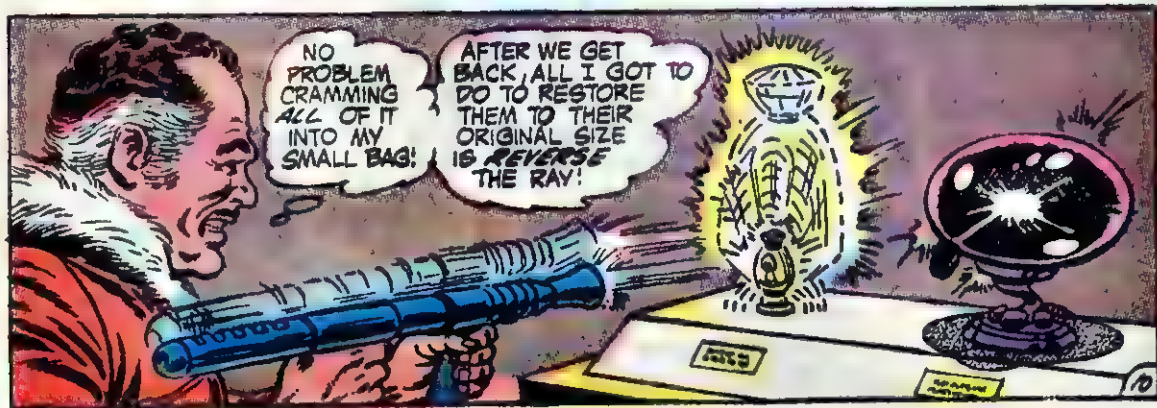
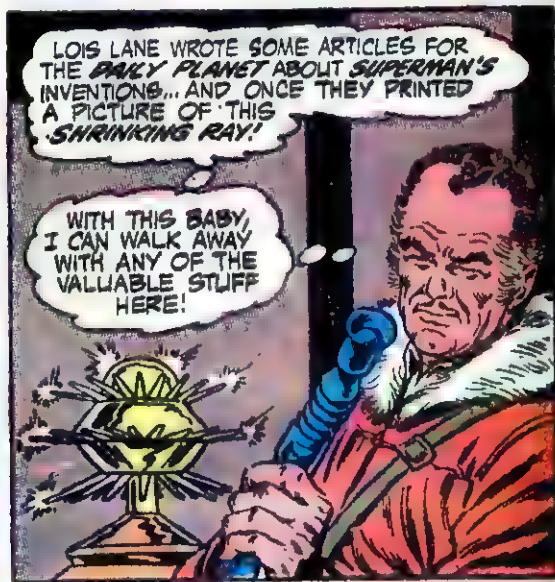
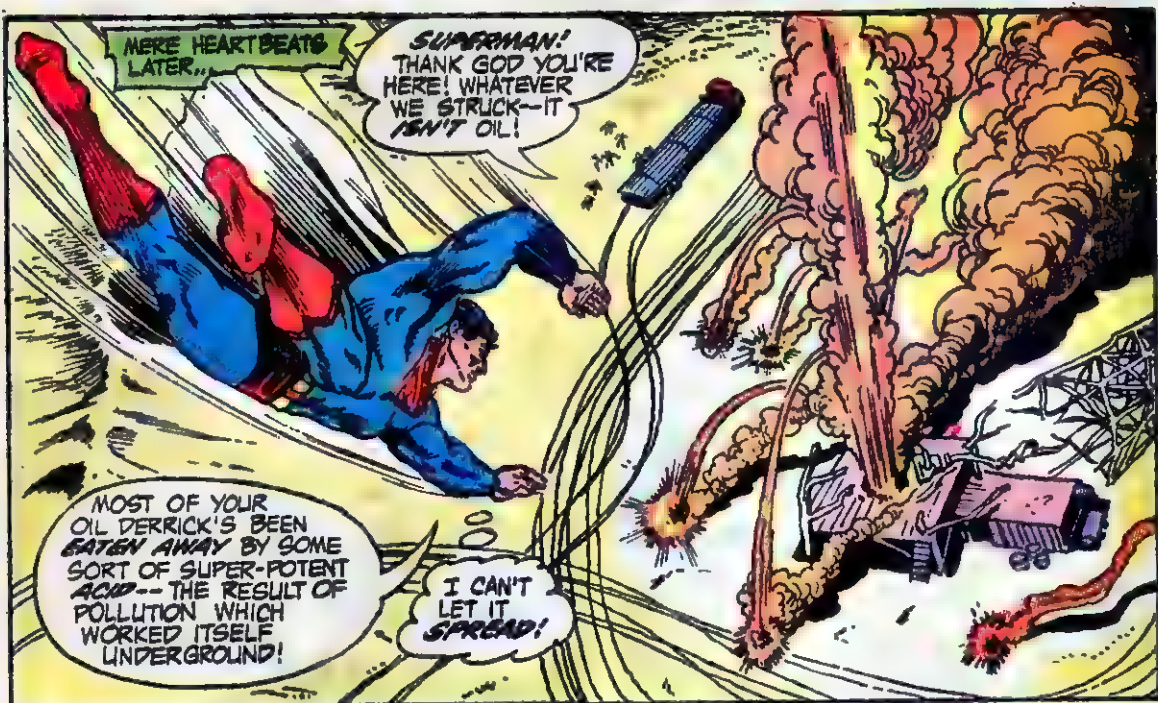


BEFORE LONG, THE INTRUDERS FIND THEMSELVES STANDING IN THE FABULOUS ARCTIC STRONGHOLD..

GOOD WORK, SLESAR! GETTING US INSIDE WAS NO TROUBLE!

MIKE--YOUR JOB WILL BE TO GUARD KENT! HE'S OUR ONLY TICKET OUT OF HERE IF **SUPERMAN** SHOWS UP!





MEANWHILE, SUPERMAN SOLVES THE PROBLEM IN HIS OWN UNIQUE WAY...

MY SUPER-SPEED WHIPS UP A TORNADO OF SAND SURROUNDING THE GUSHING FLOW OF ACID!

AND NEXT...

SEARING BLASTS OF HEAT VISION FLUKE THE SAND PARTICLES TOGETHER TO FORM A SUPER-HARD COCOON OF SILICON...*

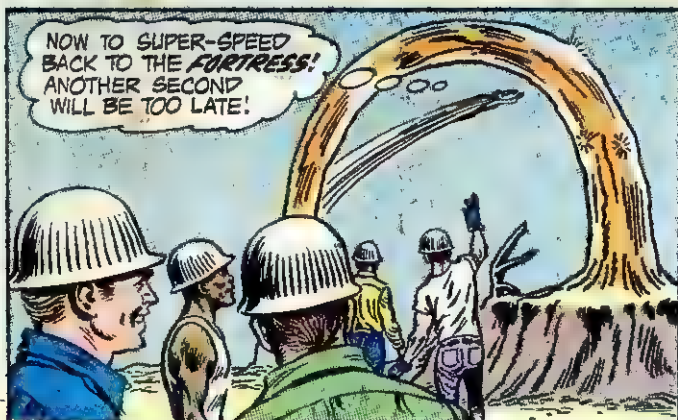
...THICK ENOUGH TO KEEP THE ACID FROM SEEPING OUT!

*EDITOR'S NOTE: SILICON-- A TOUGH, CRYSTALLINE ELEMENT FOUND IN NATURE!

A BLUR OF MOTION, THE ACTION ACE RELENTLESSLY SPINS AND FUSES THE TINY SPECKS FROM THE DESERT SURFACE...

UNTIL, ONLY SECONDS LATER...

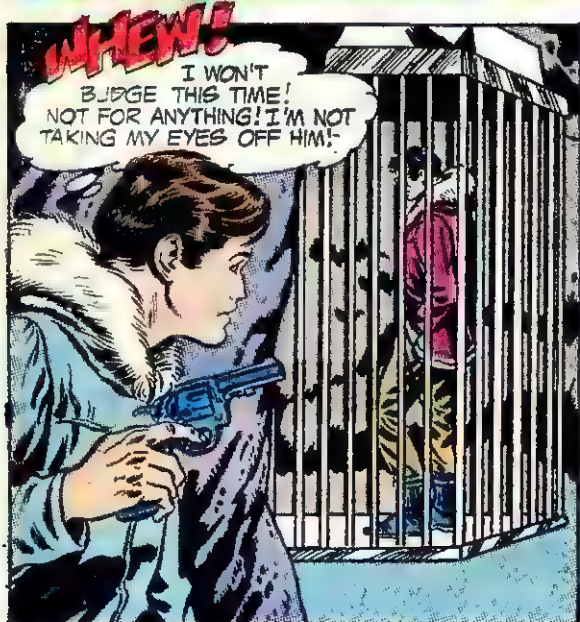
FINISHED! THE DEADLY ACID IS BEING CIRCULATED RIGHT BACK INTO THE UNDERGROUND POOL IT CAME FROM!



NOW TO SUPER-SPEED
BACK TO THE **FORTRESS!**
ANOTHER SECOND
WILL BE TOO LATE!



IF KENT ESCAPED
SOMEHOW, DAD
WILL NEVER
FORGIVE ME!



WHEW!

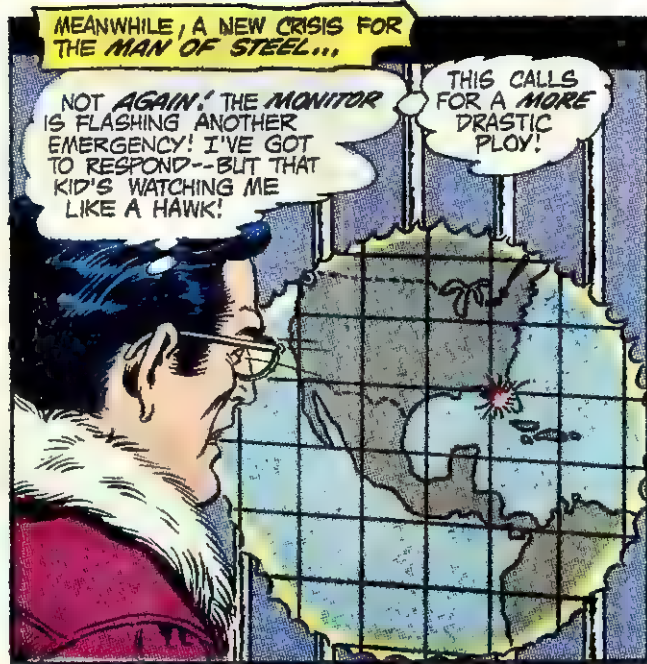
I WON'T
BUDGE THIS TIME!
NOT FOR ANYTHING! I'M NOT
TAKING MY EYES OFF HIM!



AND ELSEWHERE...

**SLESAH! WHERE
THE DEVIL ARE
YOU?**

THAT FOOL!
PROBABLY **LOST**
SOMEWHERE! I'VE
GOT EVERYTHING I
WANTED, AND
I'M ALMOST
READY TO LEAVE!
IF HE GETS
LEFT BEHIND,
THAT'S **HIS**
TOUGH LUCK!



MEANWHILE, A NEW CRISIS FOR
THE **MAN OF STEEL...**

NOT **AGAIN!** THE **MONITOR**
IS FLASHING ANOTHER
EMERGENCY! I'VE GOT
TO RESPOND--BUT THAT
KID'S WATCHING ME
LIKE A HAWK!

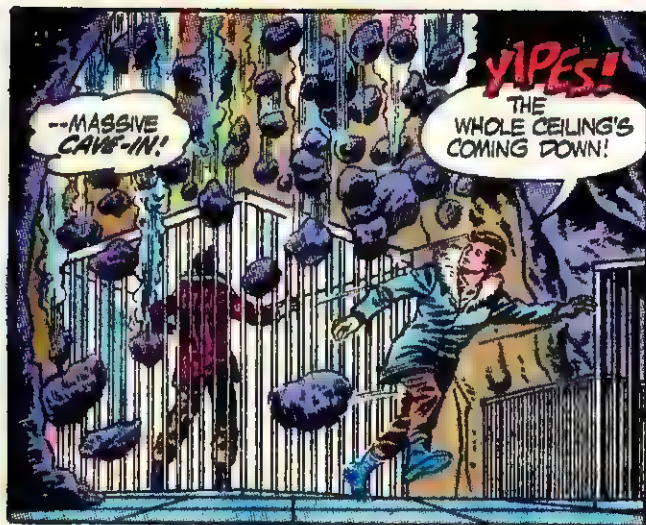
THIS CALLS
FOR A **MORE
DRASTIC
PLAY!**



MIKE
HEARS
NOTHING...

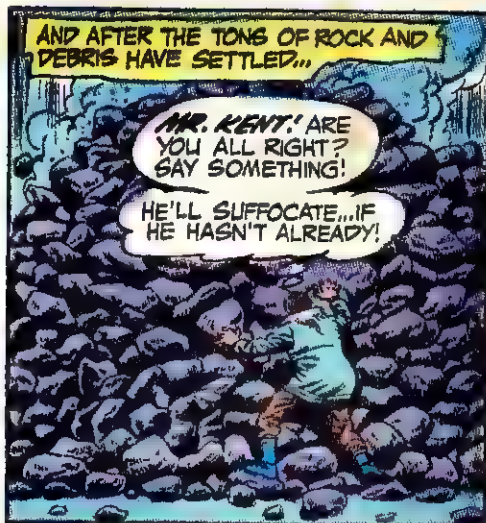
...BUT
THIS IS
AN **ULTRA-
SONIC
WHISTLE...**

...SO
INTENSE,
IT SETS UP
SHARP
VIBRATIONS
IN THE
CEILING
ABOVE THAT
SHOULD CAUSE A--



--MASSIVE
CAVE-IN!

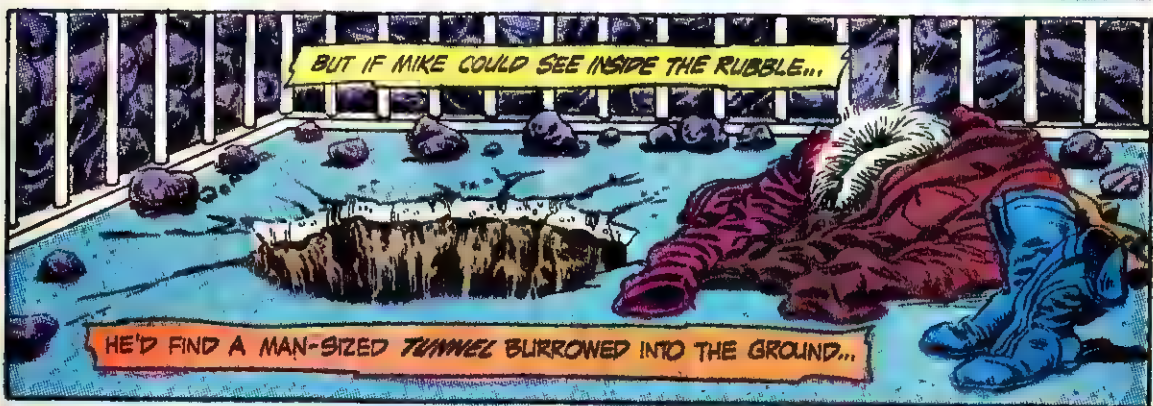
YIPES!
THE
WHOLE CEILING'S
COMING DOWN!



AND AFTER THE TONS OF ROCK AND
DEBRIS HAVE SETTLED...

MR. KENT! ARE
YOU ALL RIGHT?
SAY SOMETHING!

HE'LL SUFFOCATE...IF
HE HASN'T ALREADY!



BUT IF MIKE COULD SEE INSIDE THE RUBBLE...

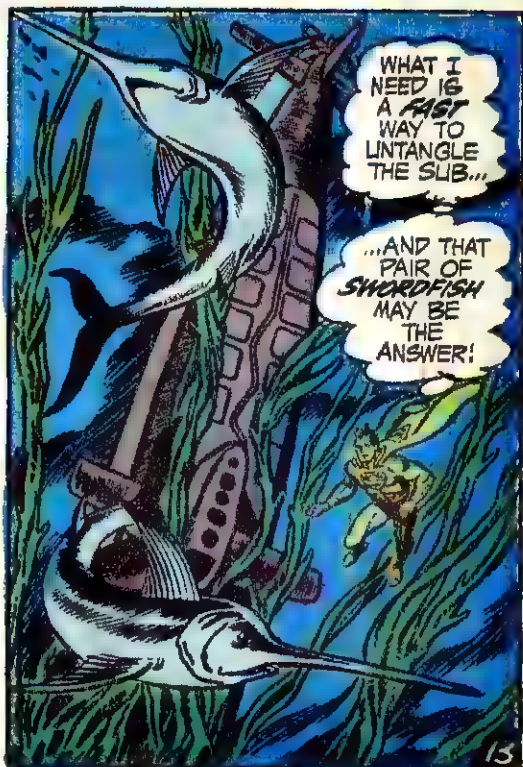
HE'D FIND A MAN-SIZED TUNNEL BURROWED INTO THE GROUND...



...THROUGH WHICH **SUPERMAN** HAS SPED
THOUSANDS OF MILES TO PLUNGE INTO THE
DEPTHS OF THE ATLANTIC...

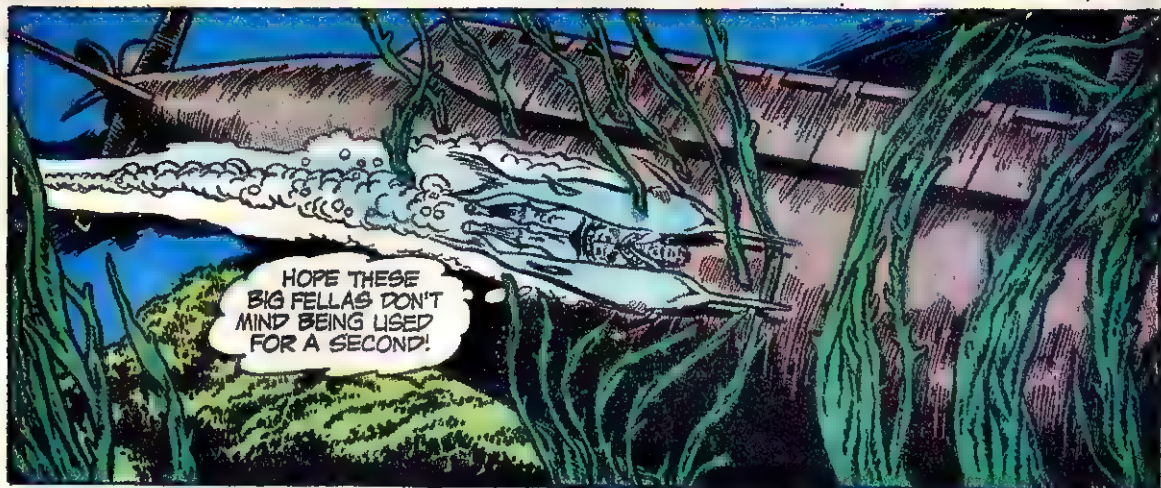
A DISABLED
POLARIS SUB
SENT THAT
SOS!

IT'S SNAGGED
BY SOME KIND OF
MONSTROUS **SEA-
WEED.**



WHAT I
NEED IS
A **FAST**
WAY TO
UNTANGLE
THE SUB...

...AND THAT
PAIR OF
SWORDFISH
MAY BE
THE
ANSWER!



HOPE THESE
BIG FELLAS DON'T
MIND BEING USED
FOR A SECOND!

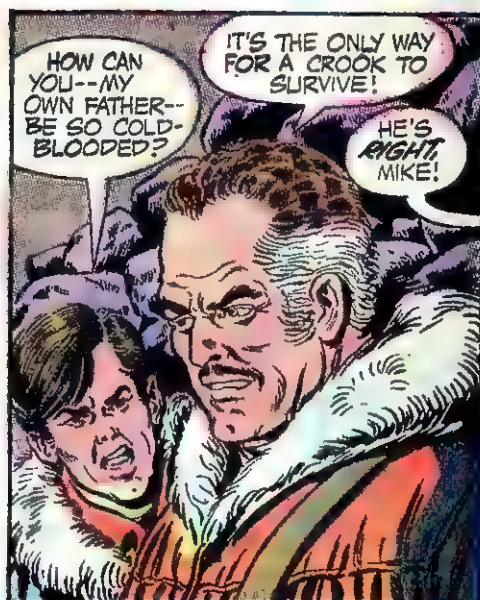


MEANWHILE...

BUT, DAD--WE CAN'T
JUST LEAVE MR. KENT
IN THERE! WE HAVE
TO DIG HIM OUT
BEFORE HE RUNS
OUT OF AIR!

KENT WAS JUST A
HOSTAGE IN CASE
SUPERMAN SHOWED--
BUT NOW WE DON'T
NEED THE SAP!

I WAS
GOING
TO KILL HIM
ANYWAY!



HOW CAN
YOU--MY
OWN FATHER--
BE SO COLD-
BLOODED?

IT'S THE ONLY WAY
FOR A CROOK TO
SURVIVE!

HE'S
RIGHT,
MIKE!



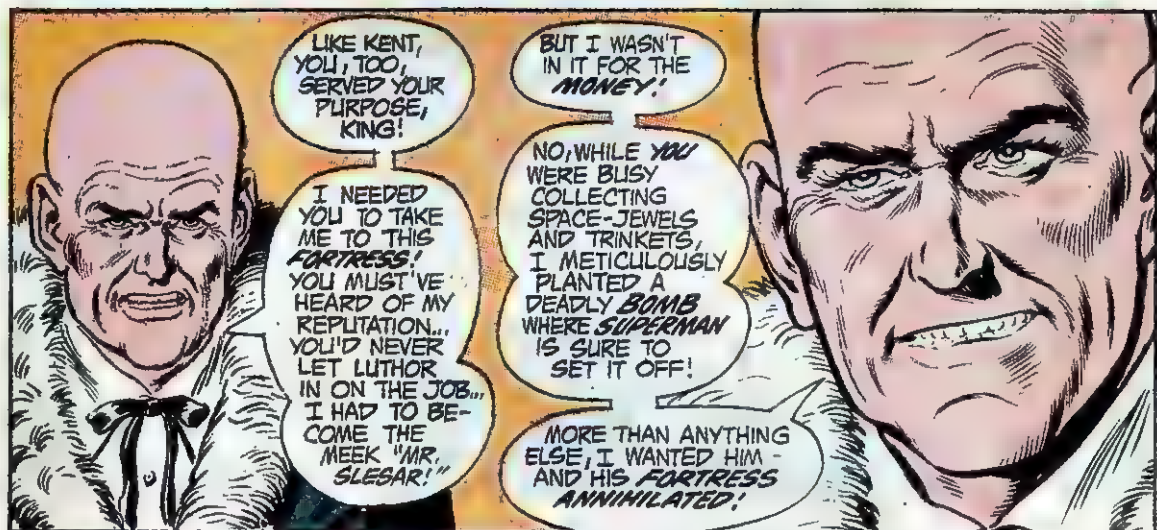
SLESAR!
WHAT DO
YOU THINK
YOU'RE
DOING?

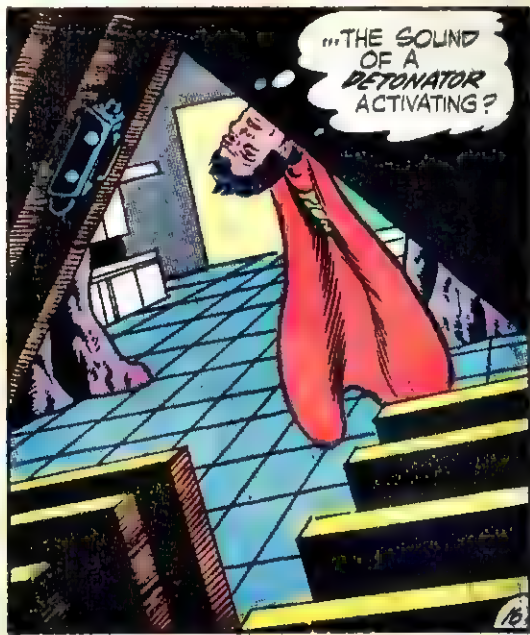
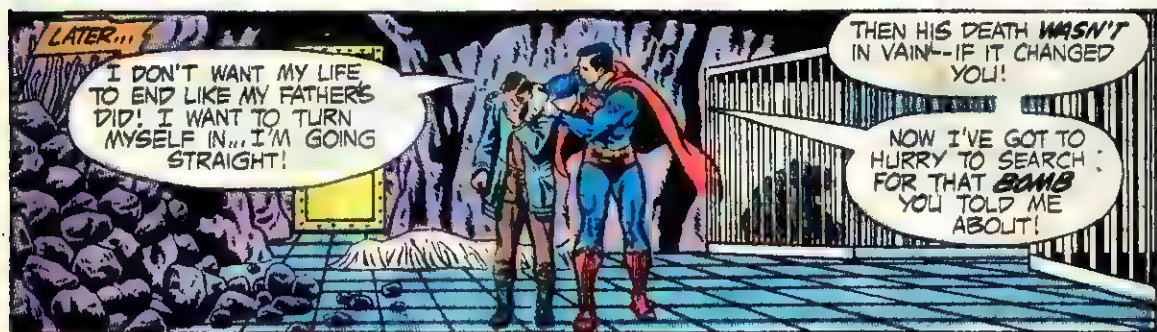
NOT "SLESAR",
YOU FOOL--



--BUT LEX
LUTHOR!

SUPERMAN'S
NUMBER ONE
ARCH-ENEMY!





INSTANTLY, **SUPERMAN** EXHALES A SUPER-COMPRESSED BURST OF AIR...

...SO FORCEFUL THAT IT SENDS THE DREADED BOMB ARCING THROUGH THE ARCTIC AIR...

SO FAST, IT BREAKS FREE OF EARTH'S GRAVITY--AND ACCELERATES INTO DEEP SPACE, WHERE...

WOW! THAT EXPLOSION WAS CREATED BY **ANTI-MATTER FUSION**...

WHICH WOULD'VE ANNIHILATED EVEN ME!

LESS THAN HALF A SECOND ELAPSED SINCE THE DETONATOR CLICKED--!

YOU WOULD'VE LET THE BOMB EXPLODE **HERE**--AND SACRIFICED YOURSELF--AS LONG AS I DIED, TOO! LUTHOR, DO YOU HATE ME **THAT** MUCH?

YOU KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT, **SUPERMAN**!

AND AFTER GIVING KING A PROPER BURIAL...

DON'T WORRY, MIKE! ER... AFTER THE CAVE-IN, I HAD ENOUGH TIME TO TUNNEL HIM OUT OF THE CAGE AND AWAY TO SAFETY!

SUPERMAN! I JUST THOUGHT OF HIM! WE FORGOT MR. KENT!

AND ALL THAT IS LEFT OF THE DARING INVASION OF THE MIGHTY **FORTRESS** IS A NEARBY GRAVESTONE...

MICHAEL "KING" ANDREWS
BORN 1926
DIED 1971

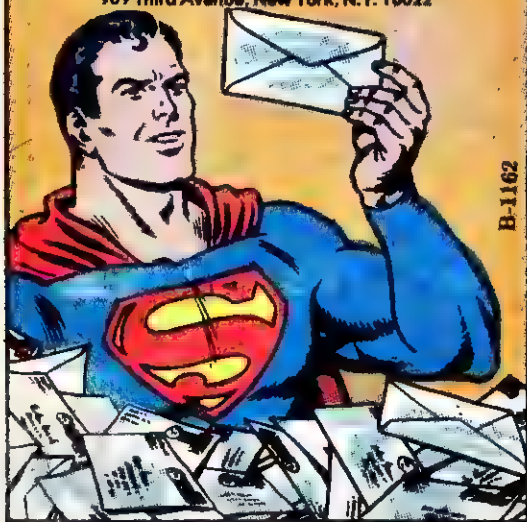
...ITS SECRET LOCATION BURIED FOREVER WITH ONE MAN!

The End

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WHERE THE ACTION IS

National Periodical Publications, Inc.
909 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022



Dear Editor:

ACTION #403 was great, but you'll probably get a sack of letters concerning Linda (Supergirl) Danvers being at Stanhope. While you can surely come up with a dozen plausible reasons, it's interesting to note that it got into print not because of a careless writer or editor, but because it wasn't a blunder at the time it was printed!

The script was completed sometime in February and the finished issue was probably sent to the printers about mid-March. But the issue of "Adventure" in which Linda graduated and moved to San Francisco came out the last week of March. How could author Cary Bates or ye Ed suspect they needed to consult Mike Sekowsky for two panels? Whew!

From a simple, yet appealing cover, (I noticed the clever use of Superman's uniform colors, blue, gold and red, all across the cover) to a magnificent lead story, I found nothing wrong or unenjoyable about "Attack of the Micro-Murderer." I hope Cary stays chained down to the Action Ace for a very long time!

"The Man with the X-Ray Mind" was excellent, as well, except for the ending. I mean, couldn't Lundgren's power have been eliminated without such depressing results? Ah, well, I guess that's life. Kind of sad, though.

Well, thanks for another entertaining issue—PEACE!

J. David Warner, Santa Cruz, Calif.

You're right on the Supergirl reference. It was written and drawn before the graduation story came out. As for Cary, you'll be seeing more of his stuff in this and other mags. Right now he's busy with another Superman tale for a future issue of ACTION.—Ed.

Dear Editor:

ACTION #403 proved that it's the best yet. The way Superman tricked the magical being called Zohtt into leaving him was superb.

But I found one error when the blood was supposed to rush through him in order to wipe out the microbe. How could the doctors pierce his skin when

it is invulnerable? Nothing should be able to penetrate it except surgical tools from the bottle-city of Kandor. If the doctors could pierce his skin, then Superman would be no more a Superman than I am.

Wayne Krampitz, Terryville, Conn.

You've given one possible answer—enlarged instruments from Kandor. But there's a simpler explanation. Superman pierced his skin with one of his own super-hard fingernails.—Ed.

Dear Editor:

Three cheers for DC! Yup, you deserve it for bringing back the Vigilante. He was always one of my favorite heroes!

"The Attack of the Micro-Murderer" was good, but another magic plot. I almost didn't read it, with Superman struggling with that Quarrm creature in the Superman mag. I'll keep buying, but tone down the magic, huh?

The other two stories were good, especially the Superboy one. And let's have some more stories like "The Man with the X-Ray Mind." It was good, too.

Oh, yeah. What do you have to do to get letters printed in your comics?

Marc D. Michele, Skaneateles, N.Y.

What did you do this time? You put in something that caught the editor's eye, that's what.—Ed.

Dear Editor:

For #403, with its block-buster, "Attack of the Micro-Murderer," Cary Bates, pat yourself on the back. All these months Superman has been feeling alone in this world, so isolated, so unwanted, thanks to today's more "relevant" stories. I'll bet he's mighty proud that Earth's people think enough of him to go all out to save him.

Now to comment on the slight clue Mr. Bates dropped: I knew that the fact that Zohtt (what an atrocious name!) couldn't penetrate sulfur wasn't presented to the readers just to increase their general knowledge (I've seen this type of clue often enough), but I couldn't for the life of me figure out how this would provide Supie with a solution to his problem.

"The Man with the X-Ray Mind" was a better than average story. But I am positively sick of writers copping out and killing off characters who accidentally learn Superman's identity. What's that you say? HE DIDN'T GET KILLED OFF? Well, gee, I'm awfully sorry for my terrible mistake, but it seems to me that giving him amnesia IS THE SAME SORT OF COP-OUT! Just because Dorfman can give us a refreshingly non-relevant story like those featured in the mid-'60's doesn't mean he has to hand us a cop-out like those featured in the mid-'60's.

This letter was longer than most of those I write, but you'll have to consider that you've expanded the size and put in such varied material that one short paragraph could not begin to cover the good and bad points of this issue.

Mark Lucke, Beeville, Tex.

In that case, you'll probably write some fantastic letters to the "Super-Spectaculars"! Incidentally, to change the subject, you readers who have been following the adventures of evil Morgan Edge will learn his origin—and much more about him—in the January issue of "Lois Lane".—Ed.

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THE **ATOM** AND THE **FLASH** in "the **CHALLENGE** of the **EXPANDING WORLD**"

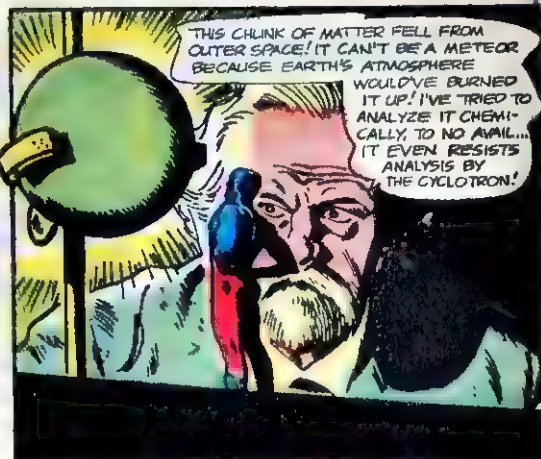
WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE...

**GIGANTIC BATTLYNG
ROBOTS!**

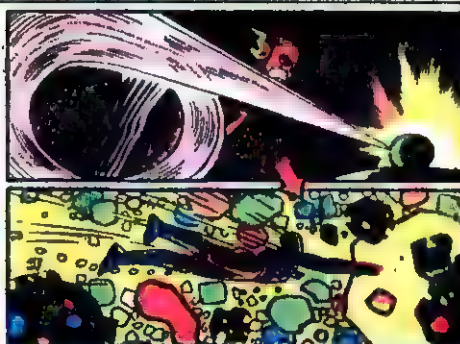


A SERIES OF BIZARRE
AND INEXPLICABLE
EMERGENCIES HAS STRUCK
THE EARTH, PROPELLING
THE FLASH, FASTEST
MAN ALIVE, INTO SUPER-
SONIC ACTION...

...WHILE, IN THE LAB
COMPLEX OF FAMED
SCIENTIST, DR. WILLIS
STANTON, **THE ATOM**,
WORLD'S SMALLEST SUPER-
HERO, HAS BEEN CALLED
IN TO SOLVE **ANOTHER**
PROBLEM...



FOLLOWING A VIBRATIONAL TRAIL LEFT BY THE OTHER-WORLDFLY MENACES, **THE FLASH**
ARRIVES IN TIME TO AID DR. STANTON BY ACTING AS THE PROPELLING FORCE THAT HURLS
THE ATOM INTO THE SUB-MICROSCOPIC WORLD OF THE COSMIC GLOBE ...



ON THE SUB-ATOMIC WORLD, **ATOM**
AIDS **LARNUS** AND HIS DAUGHTER
ARBELICE IN ESCAPING FROM
THE DEATH-SQUADS OF THE
DICTATOR **ATTILA-5**. THE FREEDOM-
FIGHTING SCIENTIST EXPLAINS THAT
THIS ONCE-NORMAL-SIZED WORLD
WAS SHRUNK TO ITS PRESENT
SIZE IN ORDER TO SAVE IT FROM
A DISASTROUS CONFRONTATION
WITH A ROGUE STAR...

LARNUS CONTINUES...

"BUT SOMETHING HAD GONE WRONG--AND
DESPITE OUR BEST EFFORTS, OUR PLANET
REMAINED A TINY SPECK WHICH FELL OUT
OF ORBIT INTO THE WASTES OF SPACE..."

BLUNDERING FOOLS! YOU
SAY WE NEED AN **OUT-
SIDE INTELLIGENCE**
TO FREE US FROM THIS
PUNY STATE? VERY
WELL-- SET COURSE
FOR... **EARTH!**





The **ATOM** AND **FLASH**



"YOU SEE, WE COULD STEER OUR WORLD ON ITS FLIGHT THROUGH SPACE, WHILE A SPECIAL OUTER SHELL PROTECTED IT FROM HARM..."

"LIKE AN INSIGNIFICANT SPECK FROM OUTER SPACE, OUR WORLD LANDED IN THE OBSERVATORY OF DR. WILLIS STANTON..."

"UNDER THREATS FROM **ATTILA-S**, WE BEGAN TRYING TO REGAIN NORMAL SIZE..."

WE'VE LONG STUDIED EARTH, VIA REMOTE TELESCOPY. IN FACT, **ATTILA-S** NAMED HIMSELF AFTER AN EARTH CHARACTER-- **ATTILA THE HUN--** AN EVIL TYRANT LIKE HIMSELF!

EH--? WHAT'S THIS?

WE CANNOT FREE OURSELVES FROM **INSIDE--** BUT NOW, THE BRILLIANT DR. STANTON WILL PERFORM WHATEVER EXPERIMENTS WE TELEPATHICALLY DIRECT HIM TO DO **OUTSIDE**, AND ACHIEVE THE SAME RESULT!

OUR FIRST HYPNOTIC DIRECTION TO DR. STANTON CAUSED HIM TO FREE CERTAIN BITS OF OUR WORLD FROM THE GLOBE... PLANT LIFE, A ROADWAY, CERTAIN MOLTEN ORES, VAPORS--EVEN A MONUMENT TO AN ANCIENT HERO WHO'D ONCE SLAIN A TERRIBLE CREATURE!

BUT SOMETHING DESTROYED ALL OF THEM! THEN **ATTILA-S** ORDERED US TO DIRECT STANTON IN A MORE DRASTIC EXPERIMENT... REPLACING THE **ELECTRON** WE'D SOMEHOW LOST, THUS EXPANDING OUR WORLD TO NORMAL SIZE ALL AT ONCE!

ASTOUNDING... BUT **WAIT!** AM I STILL SHRINKING, OR...

NO--WE ARE **EXPANDING**, STRANGER... OUR BODIES, THE CAR, OUR ENTIRE WORLD--AT AN EQUAL RATE! IT'S BEGUN... THE EXPANSION WHICH COULD DOOM **BOTH** OUR WORLDS!

AND I TRIGGERED THE WHOLE THING OFF WHEN I TOOK THAT MISSING ELECTRON'S PLACE! WH-WHAT HAVE I DONE?

YOU COULD NOT HAVE KNOWN! I FINALLY REBELLED AGAINST ATTILA-S'S ORDERS... WE WERE FLEEING HIS WRATH WHEN YOU APPEARED AND SAVED US!

WE WILL BE SAFE FROM ATTILA-S'S PATROLS HERE-- WHILE I TRY TO REVERSE THE EXPANSION PROCESS WITH SOME APPARATUS I BROUGHT ALONG!

AND I'LL KEEP PACE WITH THE EXPANSION BY USING MY UNIFORM CONTROLS!

AT THIS VERY MOMENT, JOUNGING ALONG A COUNTRY ROAD ON PLANET EARTH...

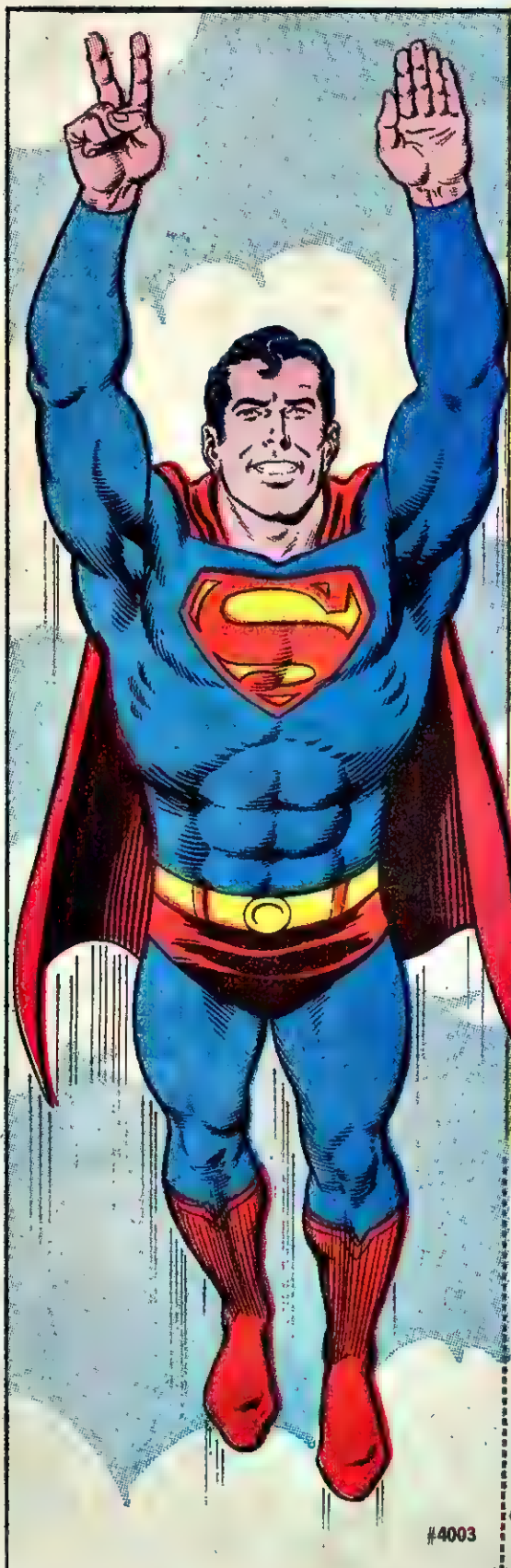
NOT MUCH TIME... MUST GET THE GLOBE OUT WHERE IT CAN EXPAND UNMOLESTED! ONCE IT REACHES A CERTAIN SIZE, NO EARTH FORCE CAN HALT IT!

WHILE BACK AT THE LAB COMPLEX...

STANTON... DID HE KAYO ME? HE'S GONE... AND SO'S THE GREEN CHUNK! GREAT SCOTT!... **THE ATOM'S** INSIDE IT! WHO KNOWS WHAT DANGER HE'S IN!

AS THE FASTEST MAN ALIVE GOES ZOOMING OFF...

WHAT GOOD'S MY SUPER-SPEED?... I'VE GOT NO IDEA WHERE STANTON OR THAT GREEN CHUNK HAVE GONE! NOW I KNOW THOSE OTHER MENACES **DID** HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH STANTON'S LAB-- BUT HOW COULD A GREAT SCIENTIST LIKE HIM BE UP TO ANY VILLAINY?



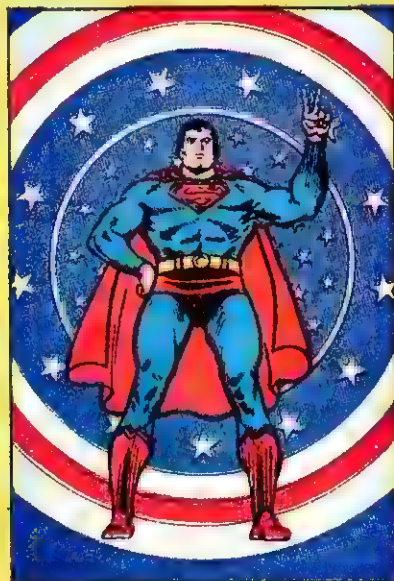
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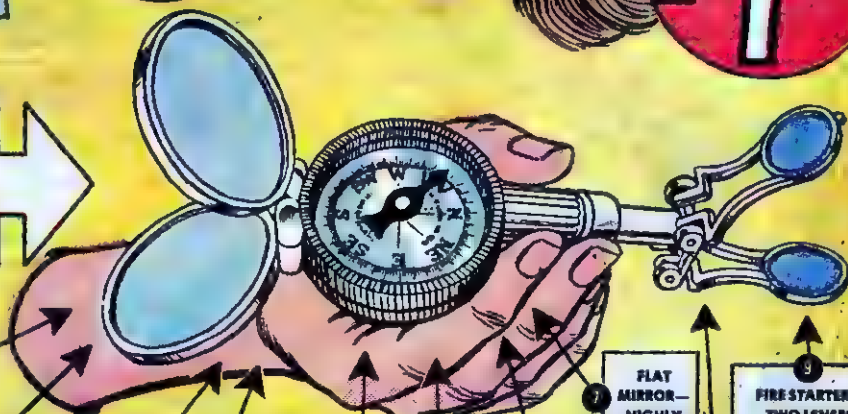
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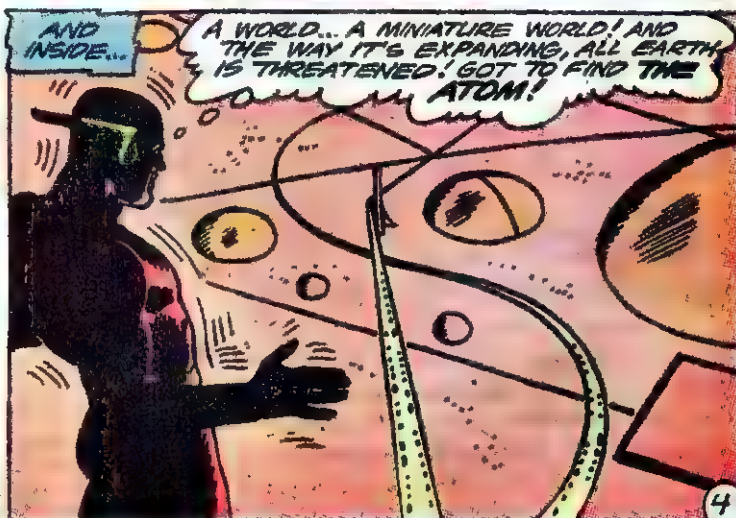
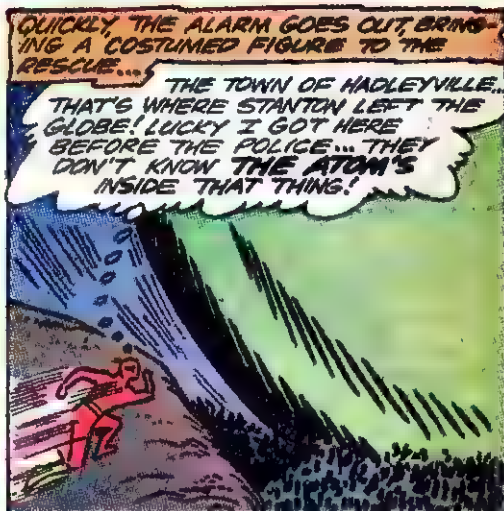
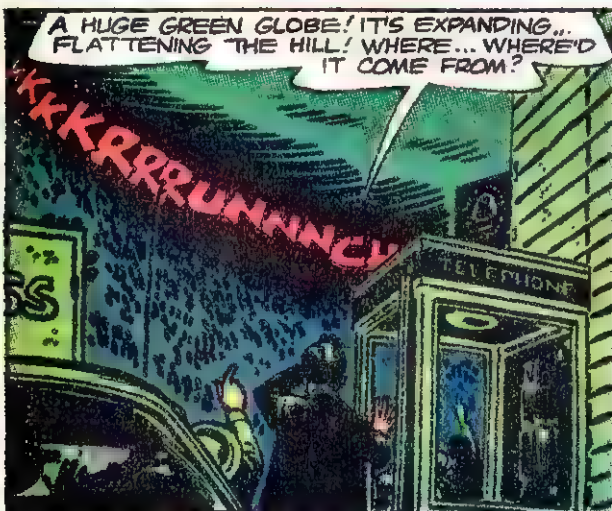
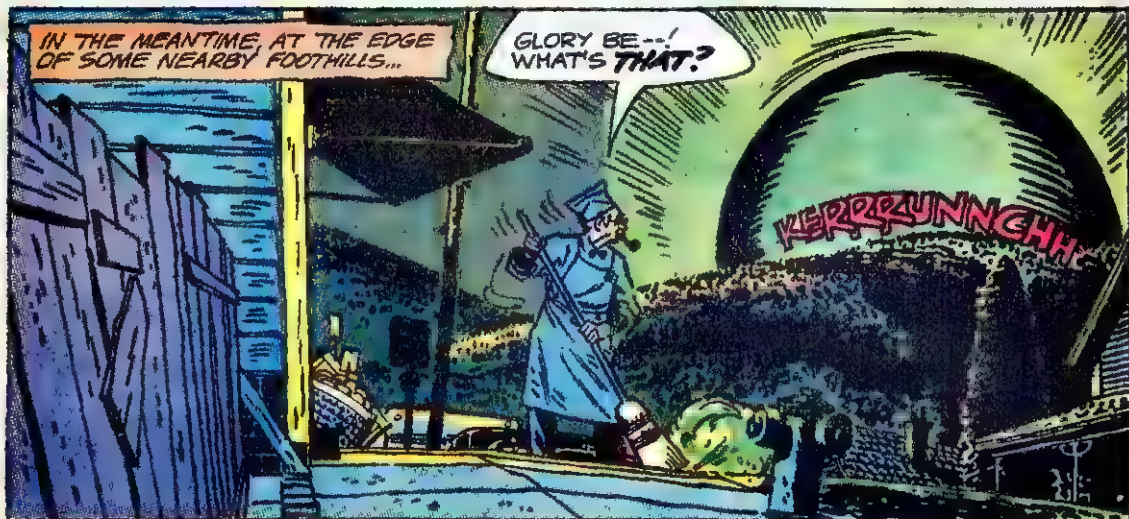
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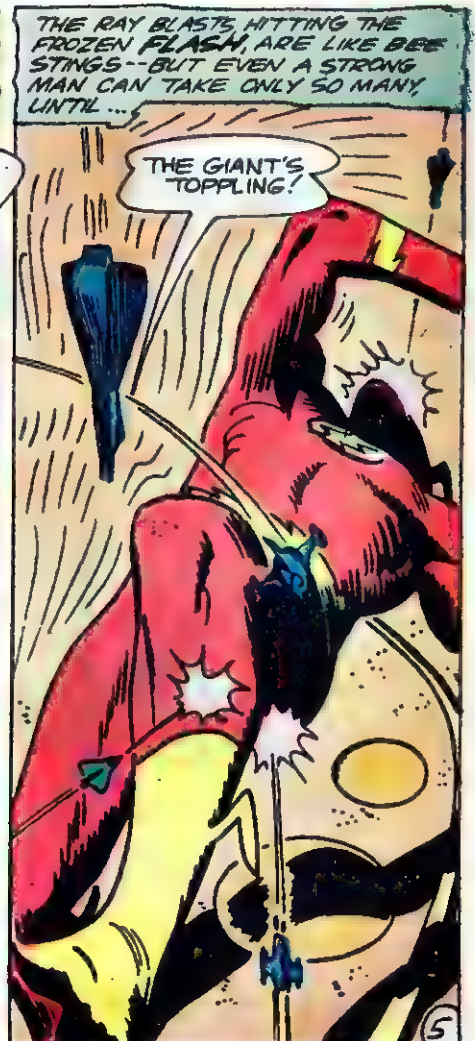
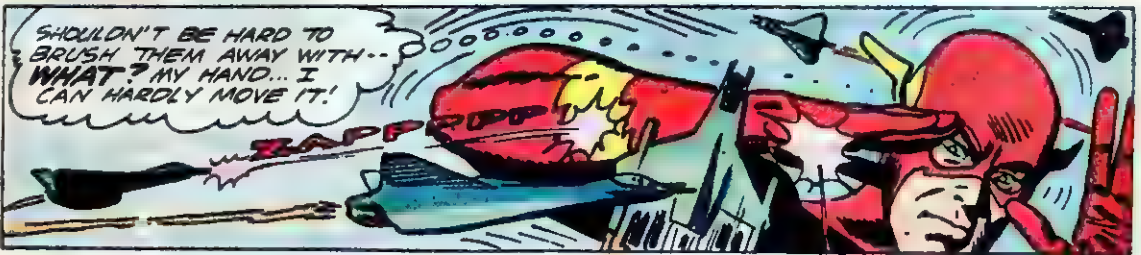


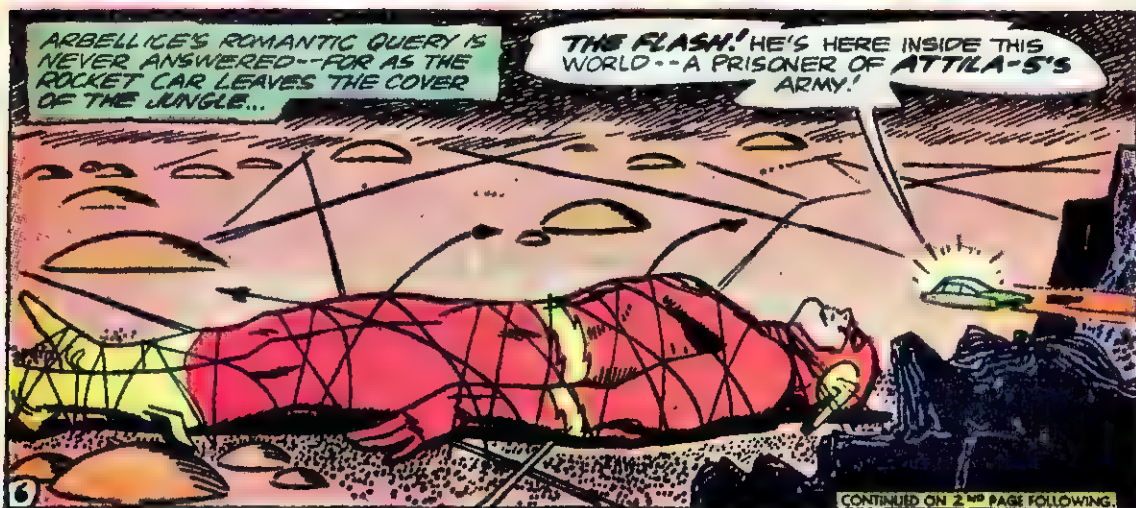
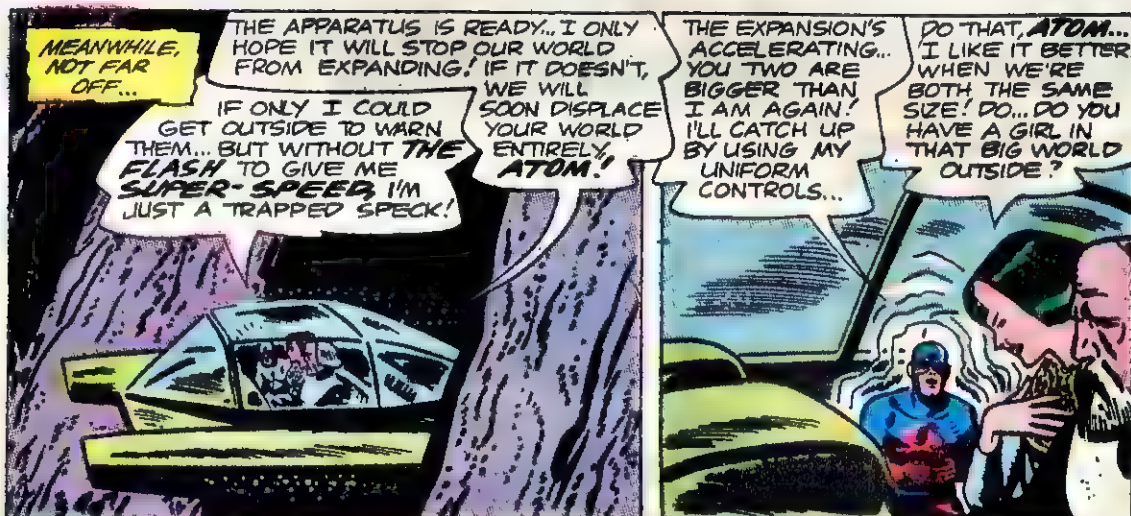
The **ATOM** AND **THE FLASH**





THE ATOM AND THE FLASH





MORE
FOR YOUR
MONEY...

...AND
BETTER

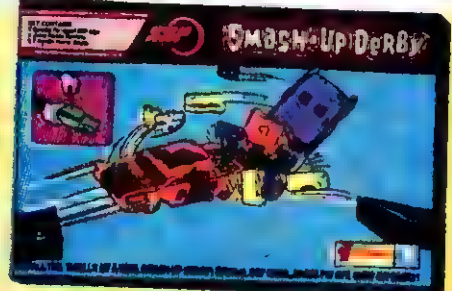
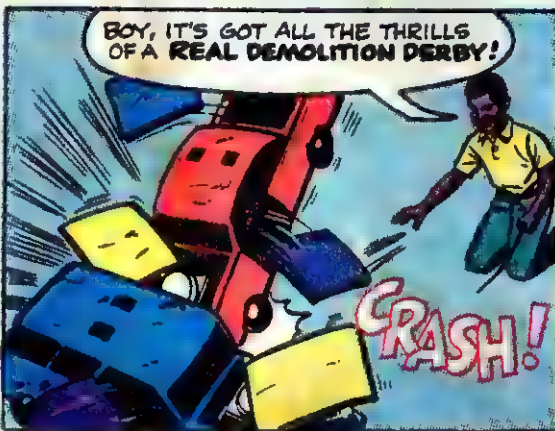
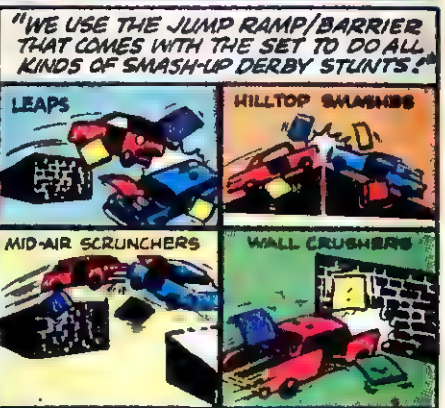
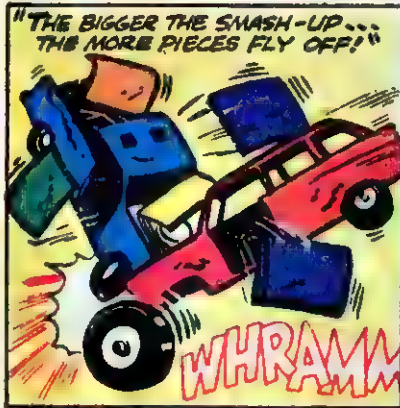
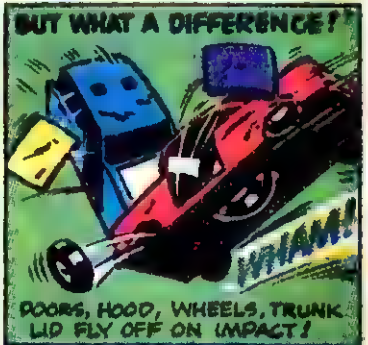
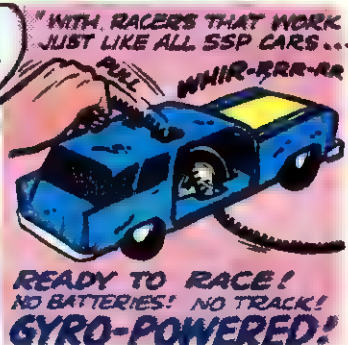
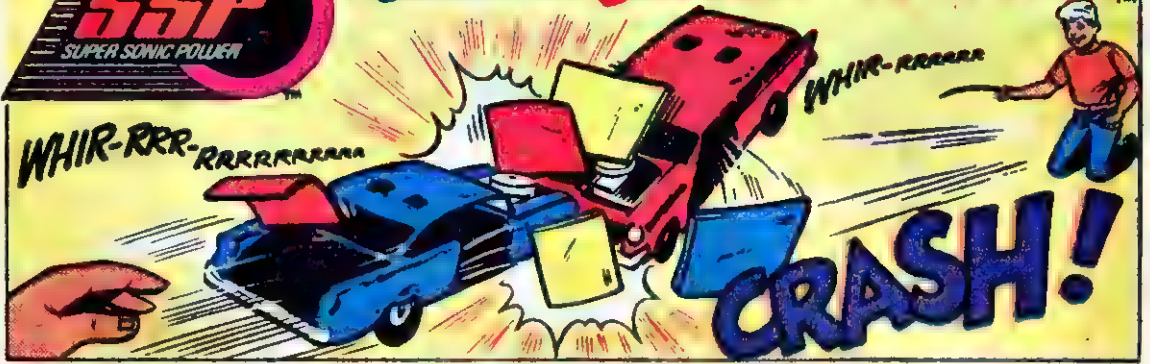
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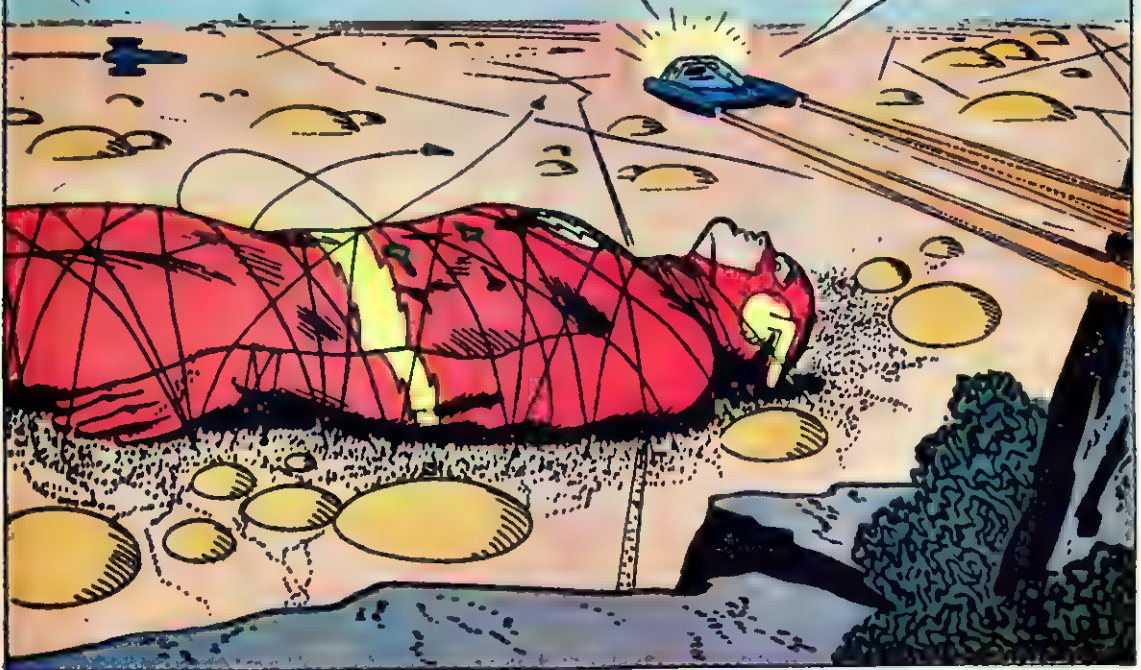
THE **ATOM** AND THE **FLASH**



THE **ATOM** AND HIS NEW-FOUND ALLIES, **LARNUS** AND THE BEAUTIFUL **ARBELLICE**, COME UPON ANOTHER TRAPPED IN THE INCREDIBLE EXPANDING WORLD -- A GIANT IN SCARLET WHO IS NONE OTHER THAN THE **FLASH**, REDUCED TO A HELPLESS GULLIVER!

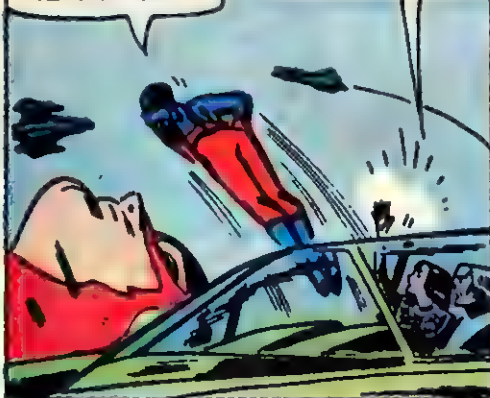
HEAD FOR **ATTILA'S** FLEET, **LARNUS**! I MUST FREE MY FRIEND!

NO! THAT WOULD RISK OUR APPARATUS' BEING CAPTURED BEFORE I COULD TEST IT AND STOP THIS WORLD FROM EXPANDING!



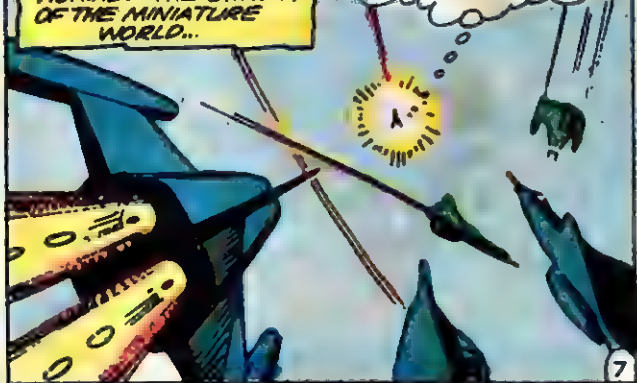
VERY WELL... MAKE YOUR TEST-- BUT I'M GOING TO RESCUE THE **FLASH**!

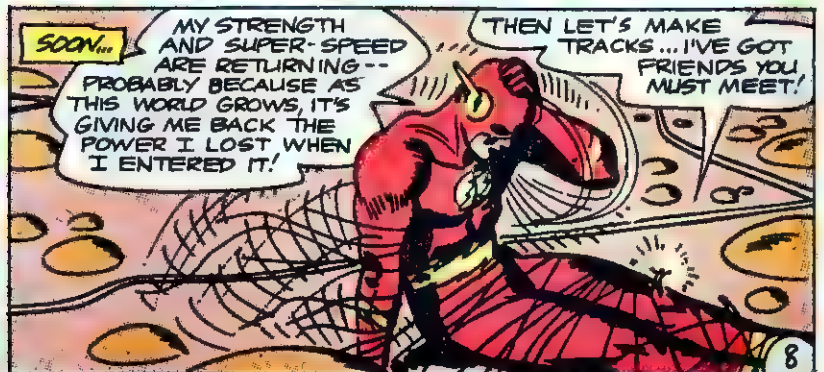
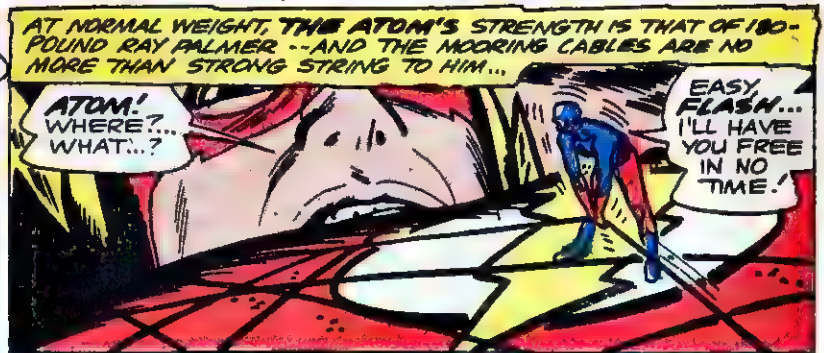
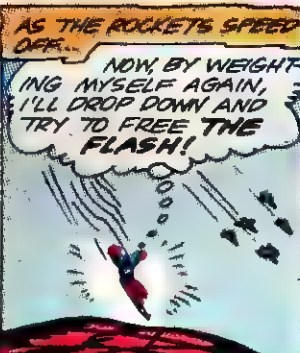
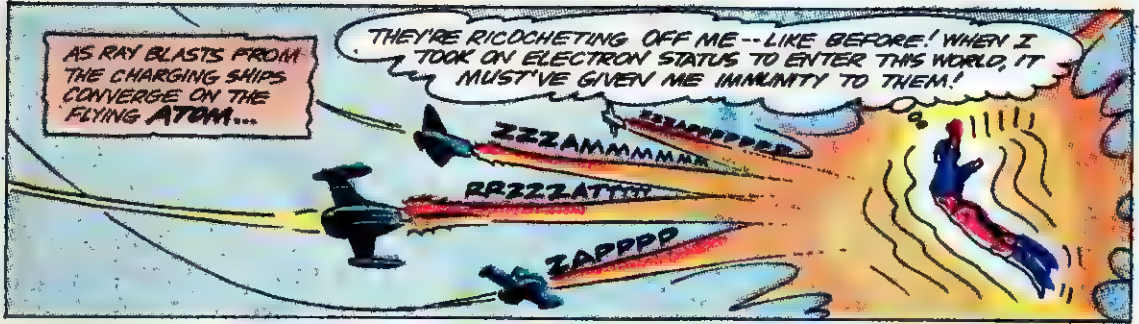
NO, **ATOM**! YOU CANNOT DEFEAT A WHOLE ARMADA!



UNHEEDING, THE **TINY TITAN** MAKES HIMSELF FEATHER-LIGHT, THEN SPRINGS AGAINST THE GRAVITY OF THE MINIATURE WORLD...

AS A **LIGHTWEIGHT**, I CAN LEAP AND SOAR AS IF I WERE A BIRD! BUT... THOSE SHIPS-- THEY'VE SPOTTED ME!







The Atom and The Flash



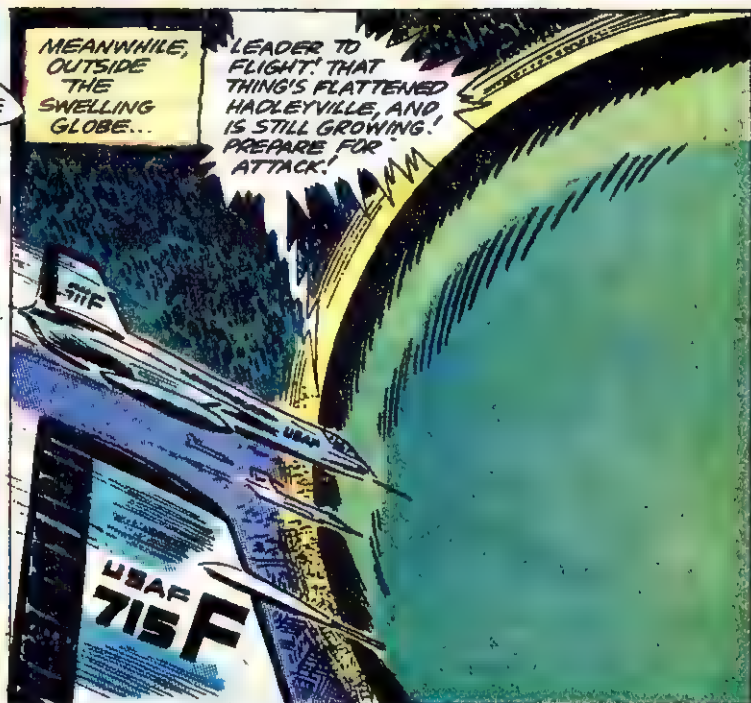
SHORTLY, IN THE HEAVY GROWTH BEYOND THE CITY...

ATTILA'S FLEETS AND SOLDIERS WILL BE FORMIDABLE FOES IF THEY GROW ANY LARGER! MY APPARATUS... IT MUST WORK!

IT'S GOT TO, ALREADY, IN RATIO TO THE FLASH, IT'S EXPANDED TERRIFICALLY!

MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE THE SWELLING GLOBE...

LEADER TO FLIGHT! THAT THING'S FLATTENED HADLEYVILLE, AND IS STILL GROWING! PREPARE FOR ATTACK!

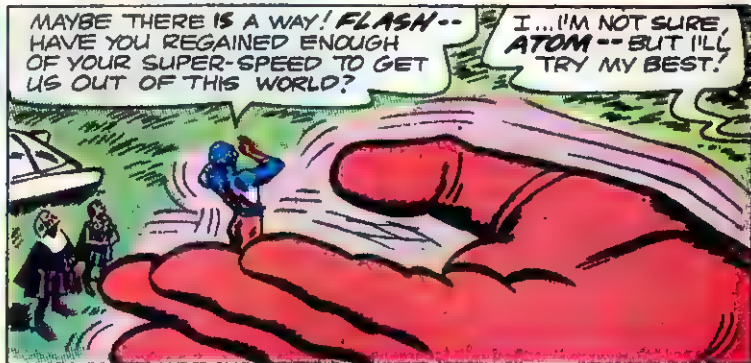


AT THE SAME TIME, WITHIN...

IT'S NOT WORKING... THE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC FIELD OF THIS WORLD NEUTRALIZES THE WAVE-LENGTH! IF ONLY MY APPARATUS COULD BE USED OUTSIDE, IT MIGHT WORK... BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

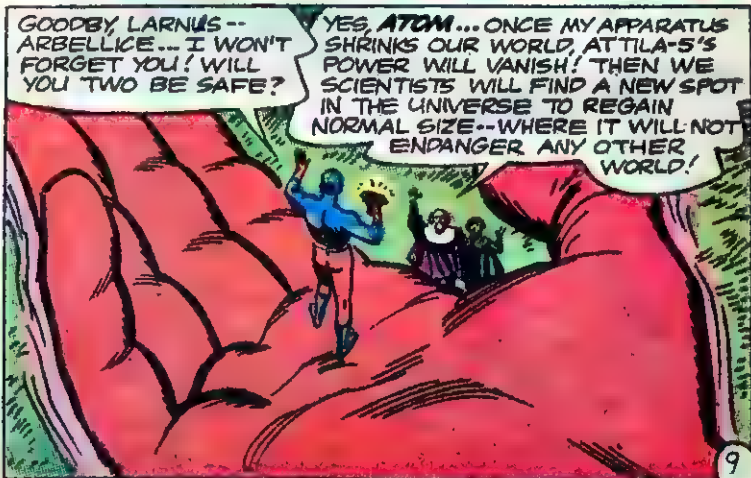
MAYBE THERE IS A WAY! FLASH-- HAVE YOU REGAINED ENOUGH OF YOUR SUPER-SPEED TO GET US OUT OF THIS WORLD?

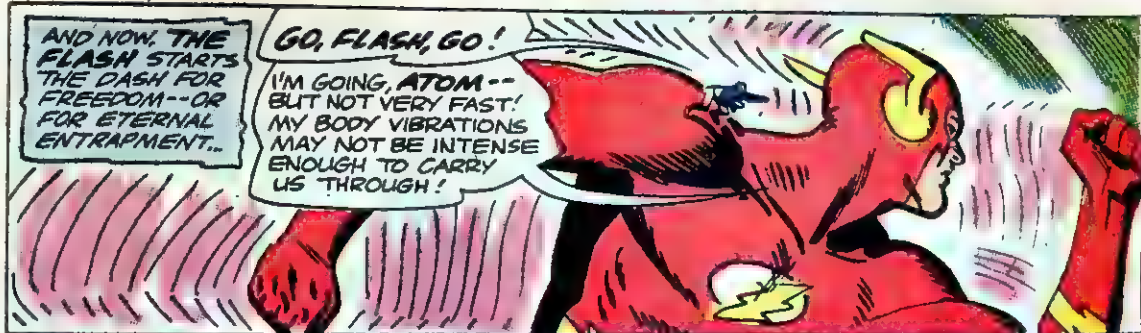
I... I'M NOT SURE, ATOM-- BUT I'LL TRY MY BEST!



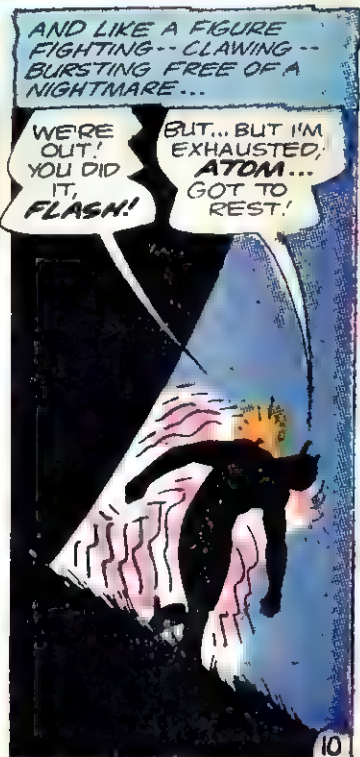
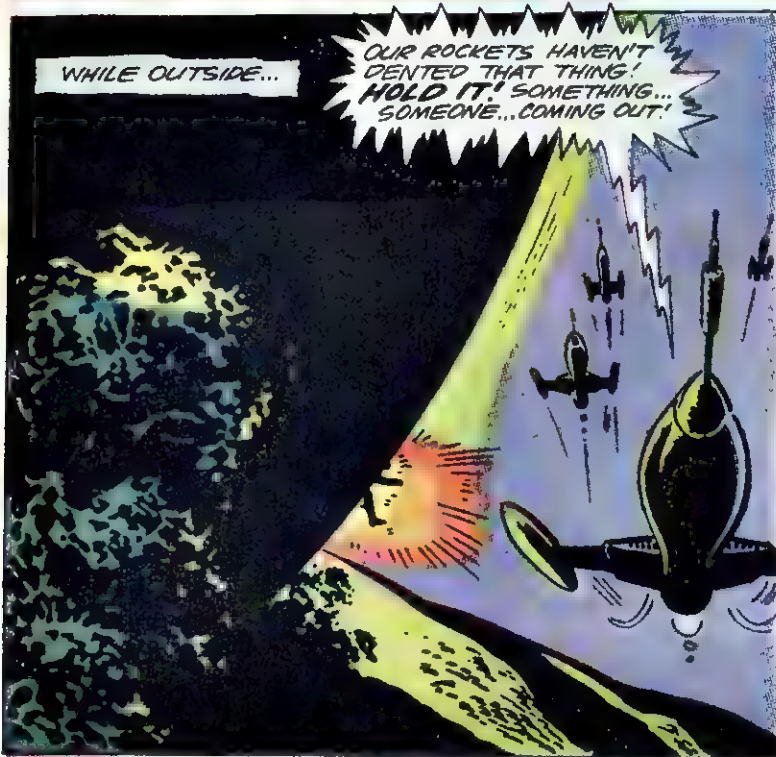
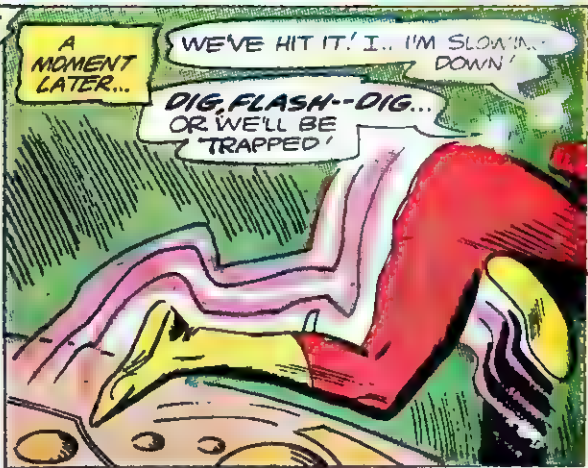
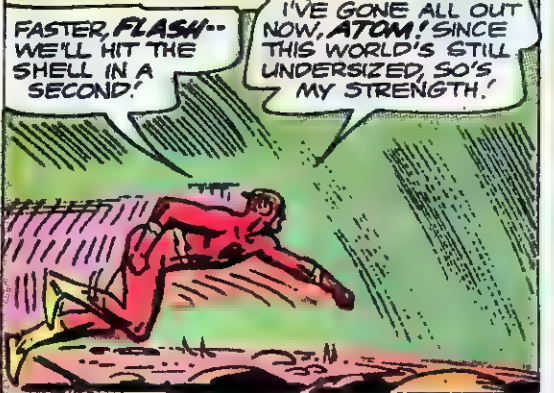
GOODBY, LARNUS-- ARBELLICE... I WON'T FORGET YOU! WILL YOU TWO BE SAFE?

YES, ATOM... ONCE MY APPARATUS SHRINKS OUR WORLD, ATILA-S'S POWER WILL VANISH! THEN WE SCIENTISTS WILL FIND A NEW SPOT IN THE UNIVERSE TO REGAIN NORMAL SIZE-- WHERE IT WILL NOT ENDANGER ANY OTHER WORLD!





STRAINING HIS EVERY SINEW, THE SCARLET SPEEDSTER RACES TO BUILD UP ESCAPE SPEED...





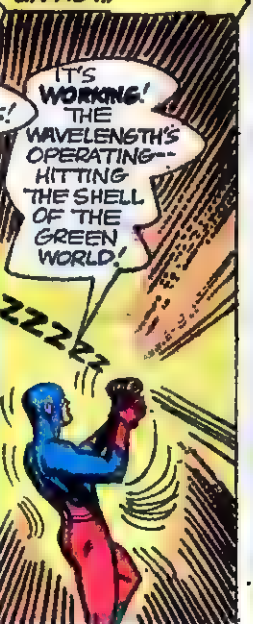
The Atom and The Flash



GO AHEAD--WHILE I TRY LARNUS' APPARATUS! KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED, FLASH...IF THIS DOESN'T WORK, I HATE TO THINK OF THE CONSEQUENCES!



FRANTICALLY, THE ATOM FIDDLES WITH THE CONTROLS, UNTIL ...



ABRUPTLY...

GREAT GUNS! THE GLOBE... IT'S SPLIT INTO TWO!



THOSE TWIN WORLDS ARE SMALLER THAN THE ORIGINAL--BUT THEY'RE BOTH EXPANDING!

YES--NOW WE'VE GOT A DOUBLE MENACE. LARNUS NEVER FORESAW THIS... BUT IT GIVES ME AN IDEA!



AFTER THE ATOM RELATES HIS PLAN...

YOU WANT ME TO DASH AROUND BOTH THESE WORLDS AT SUPER-SPEED, EH? WATCH MY SMOKE!

THAT'S IT, FLASH... IF WE CAN JUST GET THEM SPINNING!



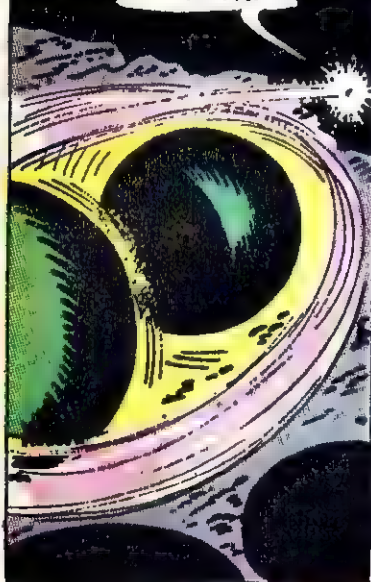


The **ATOM** AND The **FLASH**



FASTER AND FASTER RACES THE AMAZING FLASH-- A CRIMSON CYCLONE WHIRLING AROUND THE TWIN THREATS...

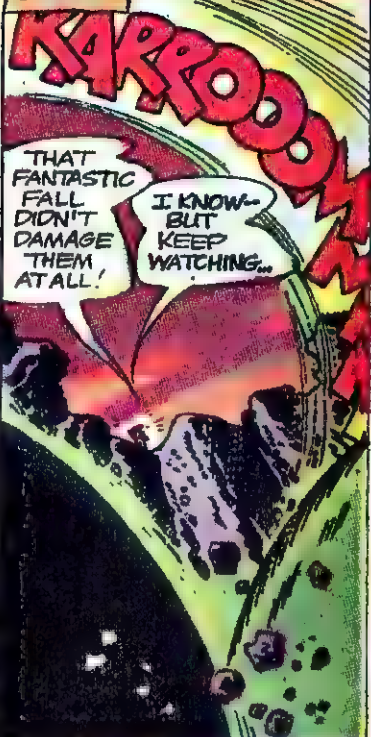
THAT'S IT... YOU'VE CREATED A WIND THAT'S SPINNING BOTH WORLDS RIGHT TOWARD THE CANYON!



THERE THEY GO!



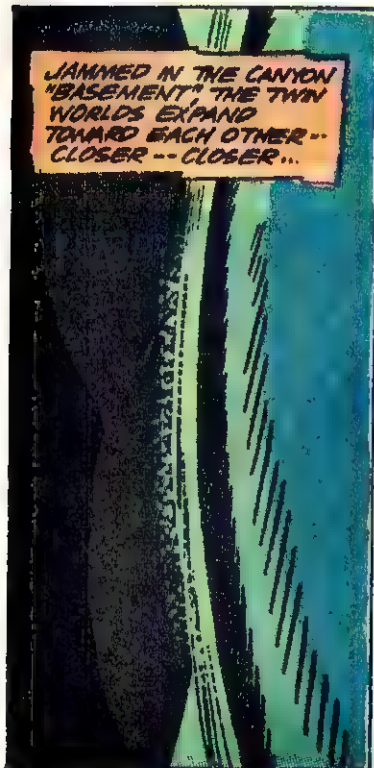
AND WITH A RESOUNDING CRASH...



THAT FANTASTIC FALL DIDN'T DAMAGE THEM AT ALL!

I KNOW-- BUT KEEP WATCHING...

JAMMED IN THE CANYON "BASEMENT" THE TWIN WORLDS EXPAND TOWARD EACH OTHER-- CLOSER -- CLOSER...



AND AS THEY MEET TO SWELL AGAINST EACH OTHER WITH FANTASTIC PRESSURE...



THEY--THEY'RE GONE... BOTH THOSE MENACES! I HAD A HUNCH THE ONLY THING THAT WOULD HALT THAT DEADLY EXPANSION WAS TO PIT THOSE TWIN THREATS AGAINST EACH OTHER-- LIKE TWO IRRESISTIBLE FORCES MEETING!

THAT TINY CHUNK-- FLYING UP OUT OF THE CANYON TOWARD THE SKY...

IT'S THE GREEN WORLD... BACK TO MINIATURE SIZE AGAIN! LARNUS AND HIS SCIENTISTS MUST'VE TAKEN OVER-- AND NOW THEY'RE OFF TO SPACE, TO FIND A NEW HOME ORBIT! GOOD LUCK TO THEM!

LATER, IN THE LAB OF RAY PALMER, IN MY TOWN...

MYSTEROUS MENACE DESTROYED BY FLASH AND ATOM!

THAT'S RIGHT, FLASH... WHEN THE GREEN WORLD RETURNED TO SPACE, DR. STANTON'S TRANCE BROKE! HE REMEMBERS NOTHING OF THE THREAT HE UNLEASHED AGAINST EARTH! WELL, IT WAS GREAT TEAMING UP WITH YOU! SEE YOU SOON... SO LONG!

AND IN CENTRAL CITY...

WHO WAS THAT, IRIS? WHY, JUST A FRIEND!

HMMMPH! YOU WASTE TIME GABBING, BUT HAVEN'T TIME FOR OUR DATE... YET THE FLASH AND THE ATOM SOLVED THAT CASE YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE WORKING ON! IT MAKES A GIRL WONDER IF SHE'S NOT JUST WASTING HER TIME BEING IN LOVE WITH YOU!

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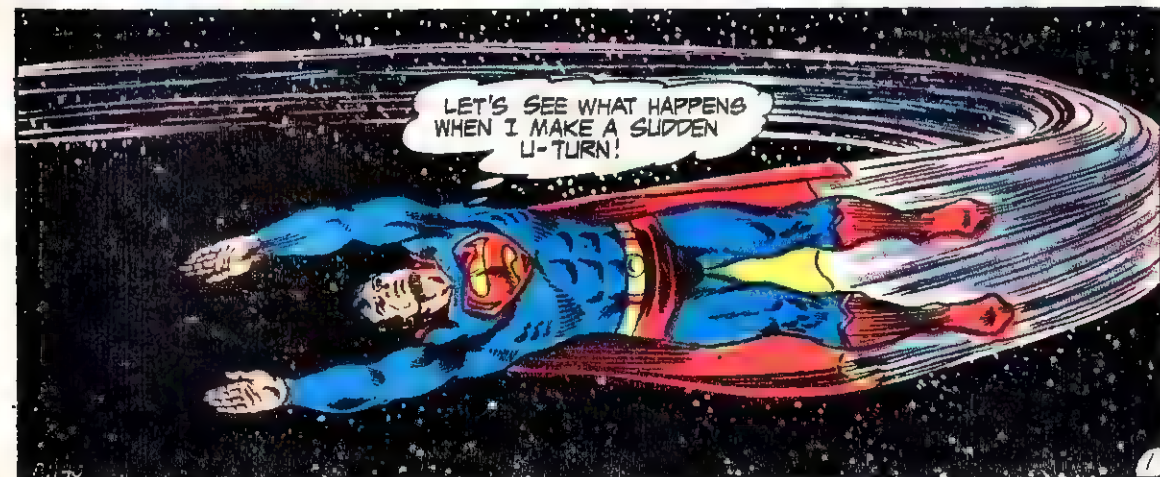
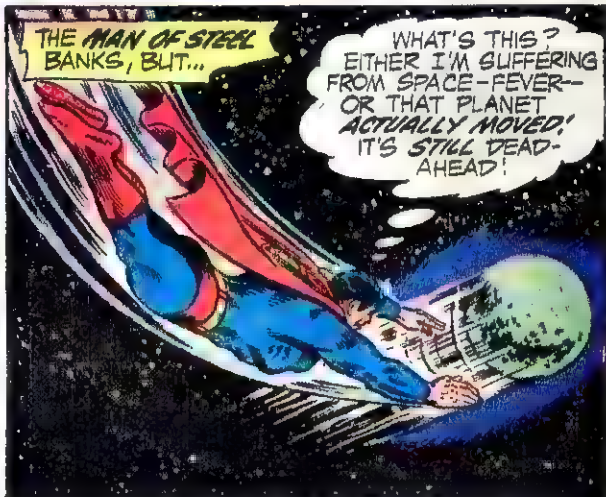
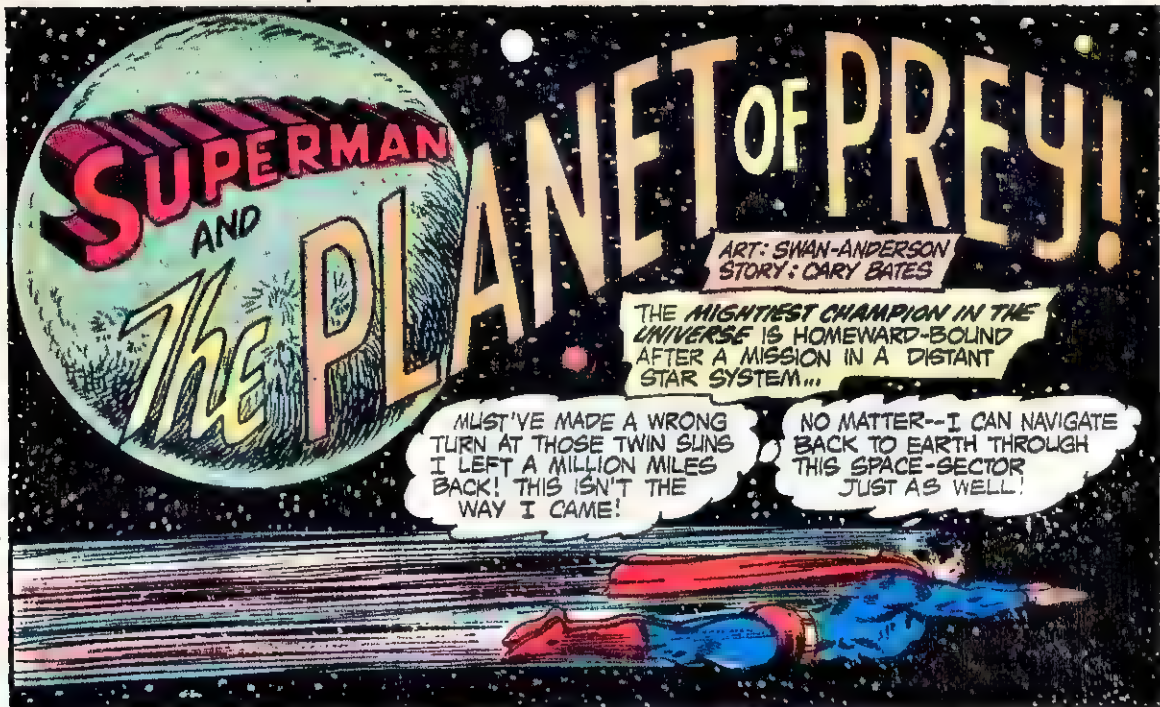
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SOMETHING LIKE THIS I'VE GOT TO LOOK INTO!

SOMETHING
LIKE THIS I'VE
GOT TO LOOK
INTO!

AS SOON AS SUPERMAN ENTERS ITS ATMOSPHERE...

CAWWW

SCREEEEEE

AWKKKK

EEEEAWKK

EAR-SPLITTING CLAMOR BATTERING MY BRAIN! I CAN'T SHUT IT OUT!

THE SOUNDS MUST BE TELEPATHIC-- FLOODING MY MIND!

EAR-SPLITTING
CLAMOR BATTERING
MY BRAIN! I
CAN'T SHUT
IT OUT!

THE SOUNDS MUST
BE TELEPATHIC--
FLOODING MY MIND!

SCREEEEEEEE

BIRDS!

I'M HEARING THE MENTAL SCREAMING OF SWIFT, ALIEN BIRDS!

AND THEY'RE ATTACKING!

CAWWWK

BIRDS!

I'M HEARING THE
MENTAL SQUAWKING
OF SWIFT, ALIEN
BIRDS!

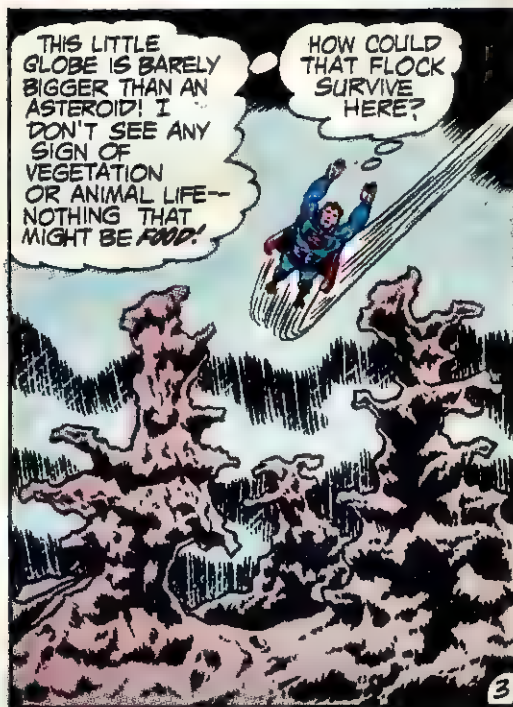
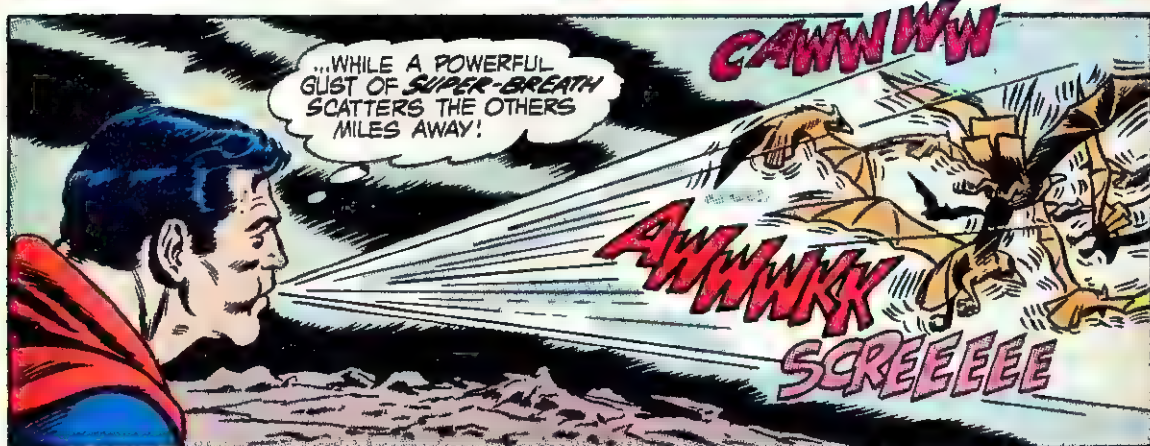
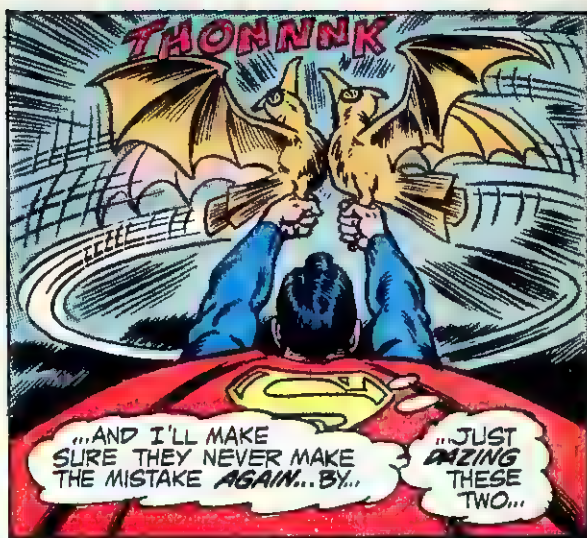
**AND THEY'RE
ATTACKING!**

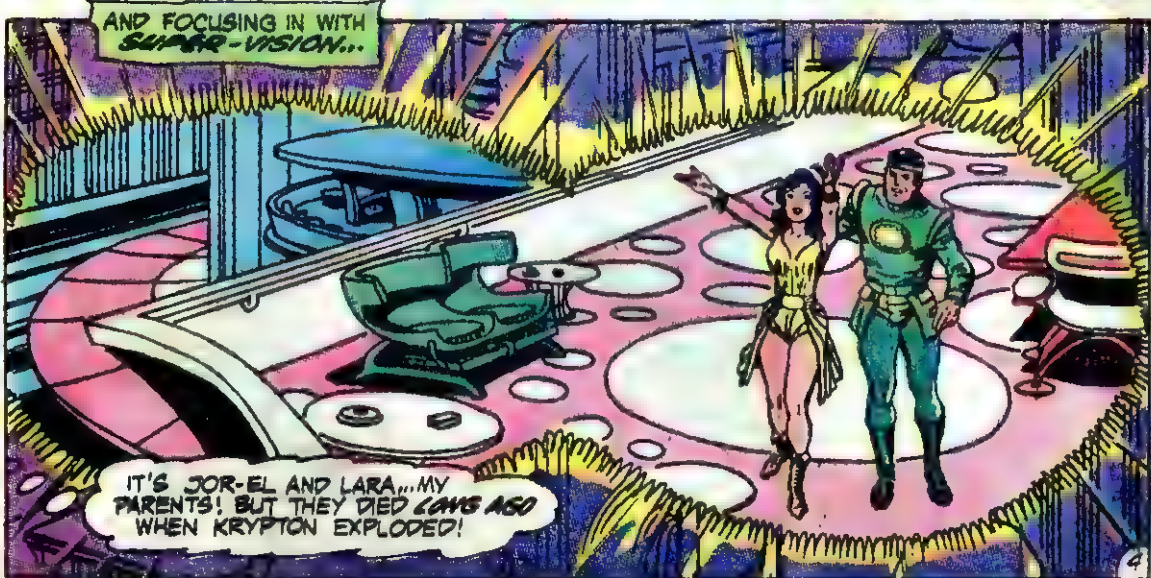
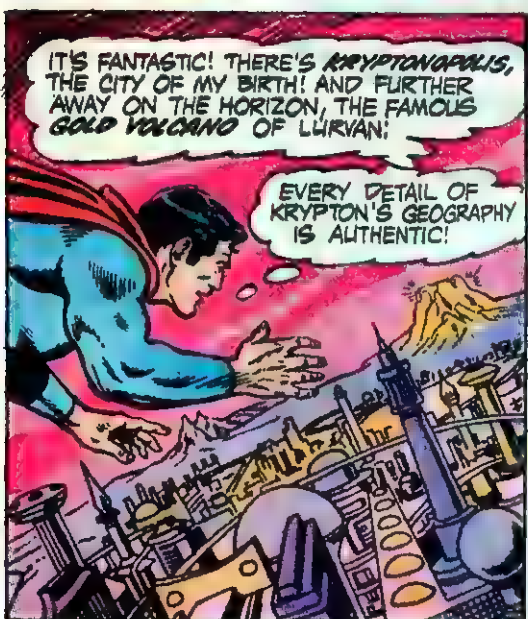
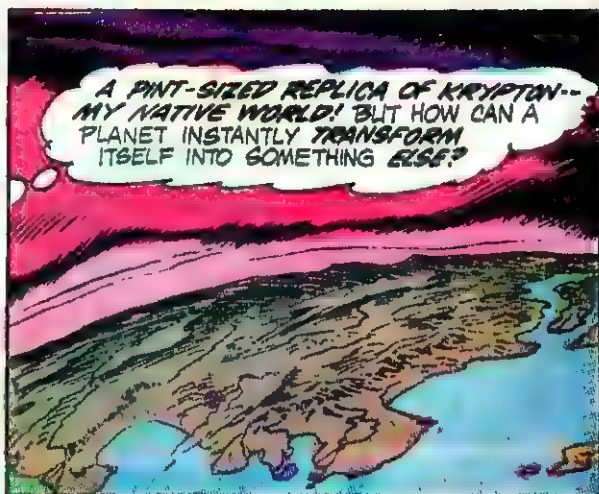
CAWWWK

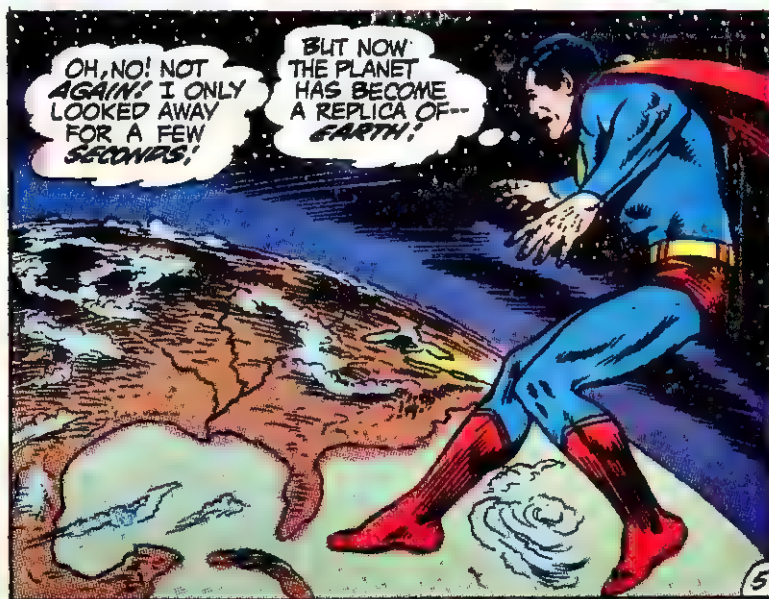
THESE MARAUDERS APPARENTLY THINK THEY'VE CAPTURED SOME NEW FORM OF PREY.

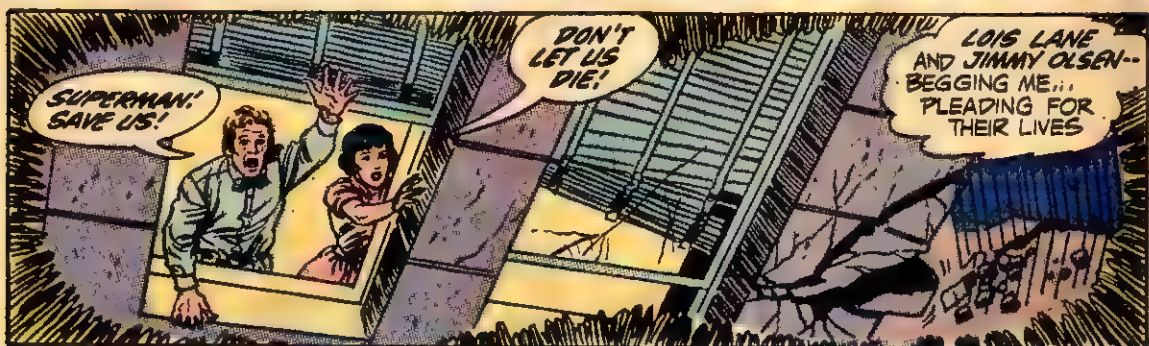
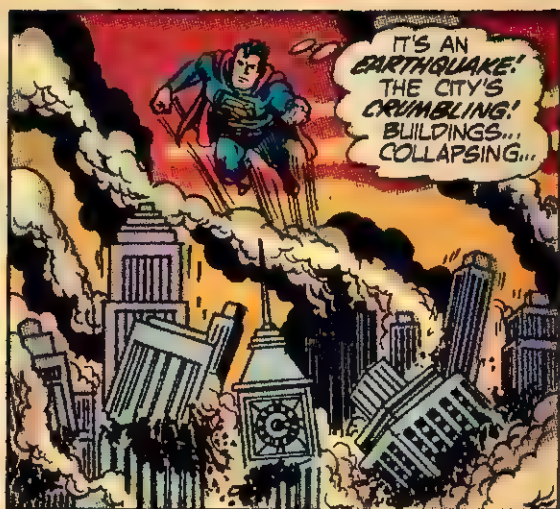
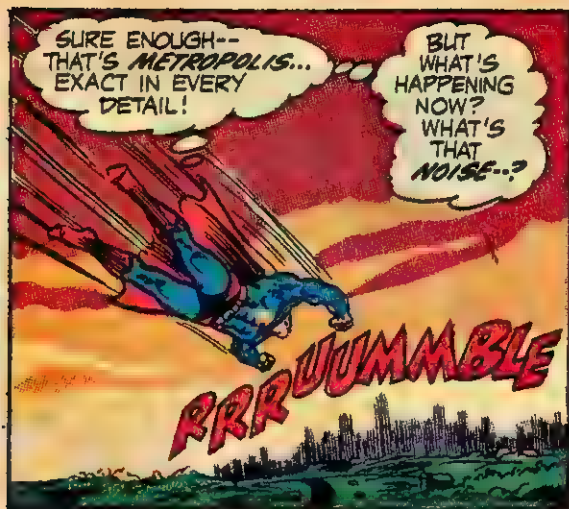
ARE THEY IN FOR A SURPRISE!

ARE THEY IN FOR
A SURPRISE!

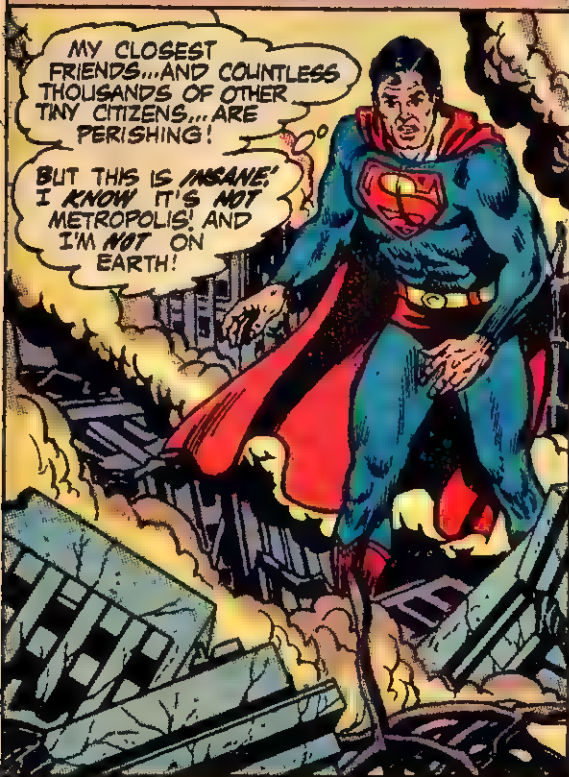








INSTINCTIVELY, **SUPERMAN LANDS--ANGUISHED BY THE MINISCULE CHAOS BEFORE HIM...**



**SUDDENLY...INEXPLICABLY...THE RUBBLE-
REDUCED CITY VANISHES...AND IN ITS PLACE...**

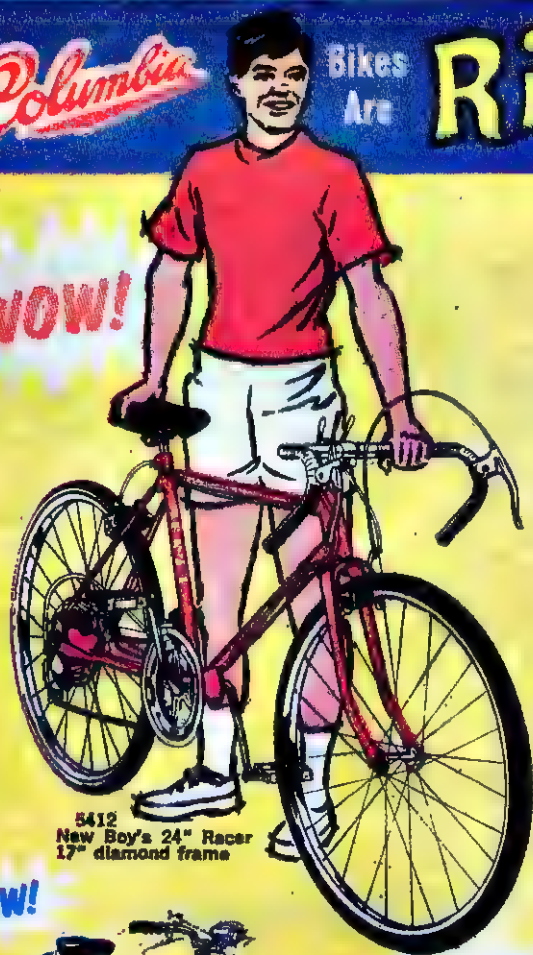


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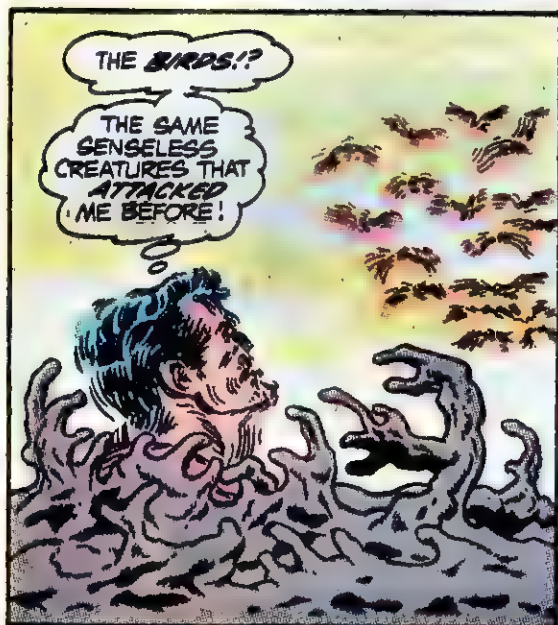
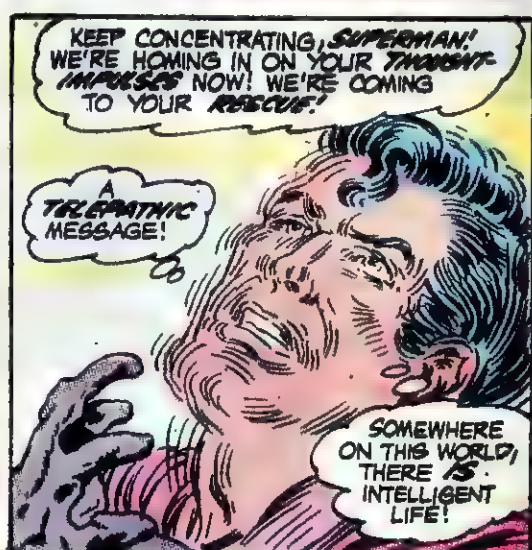
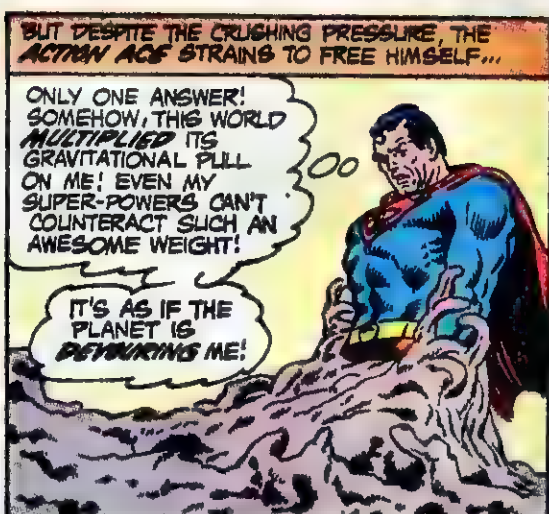
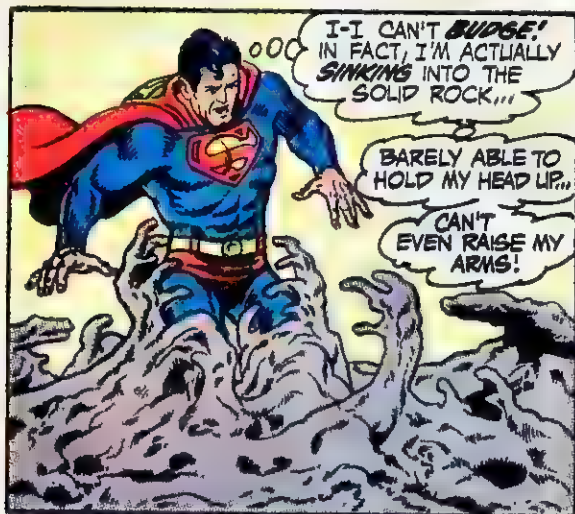
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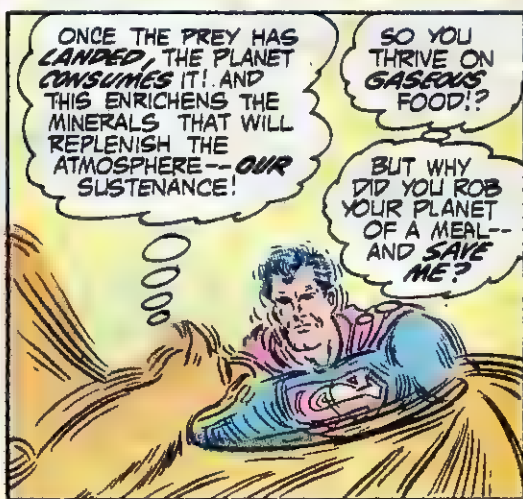
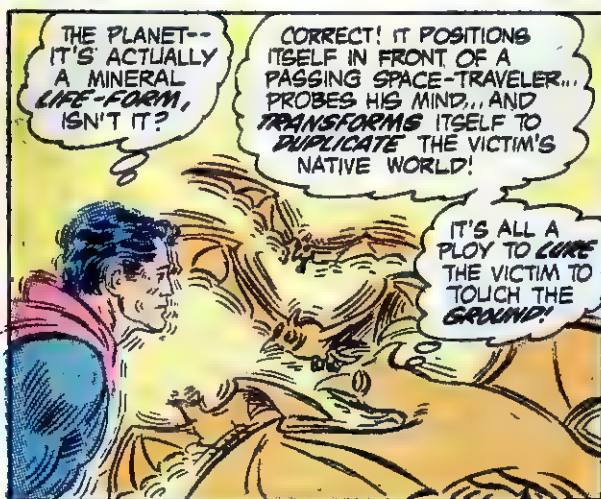
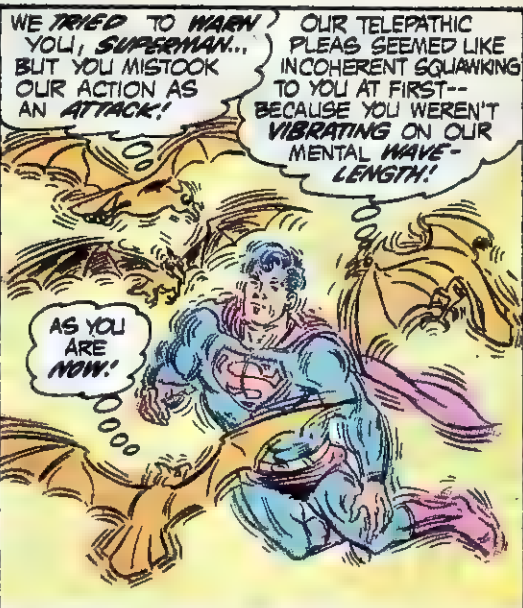
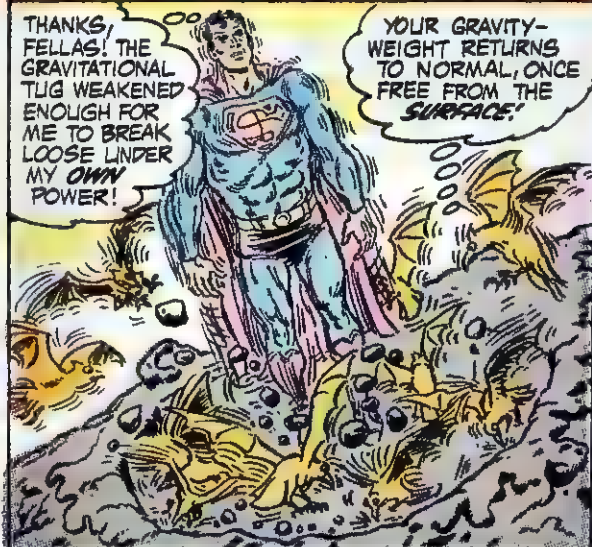
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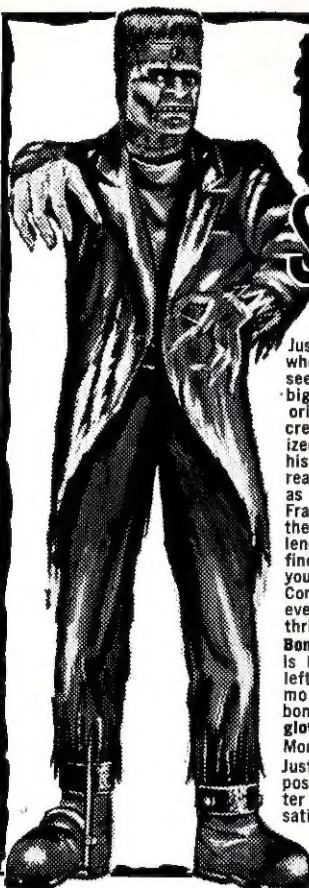
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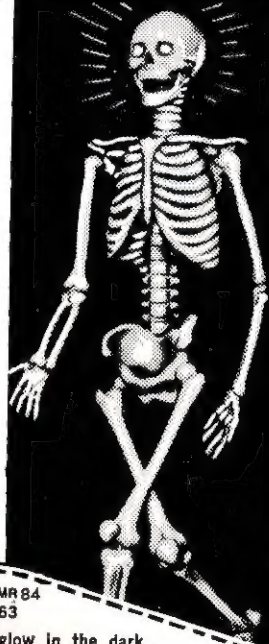
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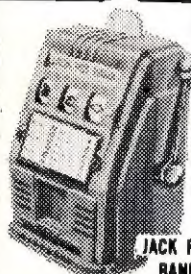
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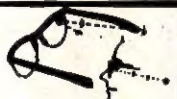
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